



Walsall College

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

Policy and Procedure

Bringing talent to life...

DEPARTMENT	STUDENT WELLBEING
DATE ISSUED	MARCH 2024
REVIEW DATE	MARCH 2025
VERSION	1



To request a copy of this document in an alternative format such as large print, please contact 01922 657000.

Contents

1. Purpose.....	2
2. Scope.....	2
3. Governance and Leadership Responsibility	2
4 Policy	3
5 Consultation and Participation	7
6 Training and Development	7
7 Monitoring	7
8 Related Policies and Procedures	7

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Walsall College is uniquely and proudly vocational, delivering technical, professional and community education. Our greatest passion is unleashing the potential of individuals, communities and businesses; our greatest legacy is the talent of our students, who as Walsall College Graduates are: skilled, professional and enterprising.
- 1.2 Walsall College is passionate about inclusion, respect and enabling all students and staff to reach their full potential. This policy has been continuously developed in consultation with trade unions, staff and students that have a legitimate interest in the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- 1.3 This policy describes Walsall College's:
 - vision and commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion;
 - legal duties under the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 in employment, facilities, goods and services and admission and treatment of students;
 - general and specific equality duties;
 - practical steps for implementation of the policy.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy has direct implications for all other College policies. We believe that delivering equity, diversity and inclusion is one crucial strand of our College approach to overall quality improvement and we place it at the very heart of everything we do.
- 2.2 Anyone who comes into contact with the College, external or internal customers, will benefit from this policy. All members of our College – staff, students and volunteers are subject to this policy. The policy is also binding on our external contractors, employers and other partners that the College collaborates with. The policy applies to all sites and premises belonging to Walsall College or used by Walsall College for carrying out its functions. The Principal and Chief Executive and the College Senior Management Team take the lead in ensuring they are implemented.

3. Governance and Leadership Responsibility

- 3.1 The Principal and Chief Executive of the College has overall responsibility for this policy and procedure. The success of the college is dependent on the objective and informed decision-making of its board to benefit students. The board and college leadership are to demonstrate the highest levels of professional integrity and conduct, always acting in the best interests of the college and students.
- 3.2 The Assistant Principal for Quality and Student Experience, working with the Head of Human Resources, have combined operational responsibility to ensure the policy and procedure is up-to-date and reflects the strategic direction of the College as determined by the Board and CEO.
- 3.3 The board is responsible for the strategic direction of the college, defining the core values, strategic aims, and key outcomes for students. The board is responsible for delivering the strategic aims through the efficient and effective use of resources, and for supporting and

holding the senior leadership to account and therefore have a significant role in creating and maintaining an inclusive organisation where all can work, learn and reach their full potential. Further Education is underpinned by a legal and regulatory framework with which boards must comply; meeting legal duties such as the Equality Act 2010. As well as failing to meet the needs of individuals, non-compliance can lead to unlawful acts of discrimination and significantly damage organisational reputation.

3.4 The Governing body instructs the College to:

- Ensure that relevant policies are in place, up-to-date and effectively implemented and monitored for impact.
- Set and monitor challenging equality objectives.
- Promote equality of opportunity and celebrate diversity.
- Not discriminate on the grounds of any protected characteristic in any aspect of our work (meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010).
- Listen to the voice of our staff, students and wider stakeholders and use it to make improvements which support inclusion and drive equality forward.
- Ensure that all in our College community are protected from bullying, and discrimination wherever they may be learning or working.

4 Policy

4.1 Our vision for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is clear; we want all staff and students to be able to flourish at the College and feel that they have a fair and equal chance to reach their potential. To achieve excellence for our community we need to continue to “bring talent to life”. By doing so we are creating an aspirational, motivated and diverse community which is able to thrive in a changeable global economy. We aim to respond to the huge range of needs expressed by students and our stakeholders and celebrate the benefits of difference.

4.2 As a truly inclusive College, we will continue to recruit talent from all sectors of society, fully develop the talent of all our staff and students, and build collaboration and a sense of community. We aim to go beyond statutory requirements to ensure our staff, students and partners have the best experience possible. We aim to continue to develop a corporate culture that is inclusive at all levels and in every system and process. Through our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and EDI Objectives, we will work with people from across the College and beyond to not only deliver our statutory responsibilities, but to exceed them.

4.3 **Our mission is underpinned by our shared values:**

- **Passion** - The student is at the heart of everything that we do. We create and deliver opportunities for prosperity to students, employers and our communities.
- **Integrity** - We value professionalism, dedication, quality and excellence in our staff. We practice and promote, respect, wellbeing and empowerment for the individual.
- **Innovation** - We are committed to the needs of the modern economy and champion innovation, creativity and enterprise.
- **Equity** - We are committed to creating an environment where we focus purposefully on diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) in our college, community and society.

- **Collaboration** - We develop strategic partnerships with employers and wider stakeholders to ensure we lead and shape education and skills landscape. We work positively with, and value our partners.
- **Sustainability** - We promote personal development and build confidence and ambition in our staff and students. We manage our resources responsibly for the benefit of our college community.

4.4 Equality Duties

The College welcomes its Public Sector Equality Duties to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

We will also deliver our specific Public Sector Duties which require that the College:

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

4.5 Meeting Legal Duties

4.5.1 Protected Characteristics and Changes in Law.

4.5.2 Under the Equality Act 2010 the groups/categories of age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity are known as 'protected characteristics'.

4.5.3 **Employment** - It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of any of the nine "protected characteristics" in the Equality Act 2010. No member of staff, or prospective member of staff, should receive unfair or unlawful treatment due to their protected characteristic or characteristics. Walsall College will seek to identify and act upon any unfair or unlawful discrimination which denies individual opportunities due to the criteria mentioned above. For more details on types of unfair and unlawful treatment go to **Appendix 1**.

4.5.4 **Equal Pay** - The College has a structured pay system and will carry out pay audits following the Equal Pay Code. Any inequalities in the area of equal pay will be tackled through equal pay action plans.

4.5.5 **Gender Pay Gap Report** – The College has produced a Gender Pay Gap Report. The report and calculations have been completed according to Government regulations, ACAS Guidelines

and the Equality Act 2010. This will be analysed and any appropriate actions taken to further reduce any Gender Pay gaps.

4.5.6 In putting this policy into practice, the College will work to meet all other duties (see Appendix 2) introduced under the following laws and regulations and will be ready to implement future legislation in this area.

- The Equality Act 2010.
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
- Human Rights Act 1998.

4.6 Provision of Services, Functions and Associations

4.6.1 The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for staff to discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass customers or clients because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation in the provision of goods and services.

4.6.2 Reasonable adjustments will be provided for staff, students and customers who may be experiencing barriers due to disability, including alternative formats for other relevant 'protected characteristics'.

4.6.3 The recruitment, retention and achievement of students will be monitored by 'protected characteristics' (see para 6.1) where possible, to determine trends and enable the College to provide focused support where it may be needed to ensure success. Decisions on which protected characteristics will be monitored by the College will be determined by consultation, reasonableness, meaningfulness and resources available. By these means patterns of inequality will be challenged.

4.6.4 College Admissions Policies, both for staff and students, support non-discriminatory access and promote inclusivity. Admissions processes and initial assessment prior to courses beginning will be used to personalise support for students and through reasonable adjustments, including for those with additional support needs.

4.6.5 All forms of oppressive behaviour/bullying/harassment will be directly and appropriately challenged by staff and students at all times in accordance with our Ready, Respect, Safe Agreement, Positive Communities and British Values Agreement, Anti-Bullying Policy and Dignity at Work Policy. Training will be available to staff to support them in this activity.

4.6.6 The College Student Support Policy and Procedure and the Complaints Policy and Procedure will enable those who believe they have been victims of discrimination and harassment to raise concerns and achieve redress without undue delay or difficulty.

4.6.7 A contemplation room will be available for spiritual refreshment, exploration and counsel for people of any religious persuasion, or none, at the Wisemore campus.

4.6.8 Student induction, tutorial programmes and curriculum will continue to use all opportunities to embed the principles that underpin Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

4.6.9 Curriculum Faculties and Business Support departments develop their own set of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion objectives which they will action plan to achieve. These are monitored through Quality Summit meetings each term and periodically presented at the EDI Committee.

4.7 The Quality of Provision

4.7.1 All teaching and training resources and curriculum will ensure that they reflect and promote Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, where appropriate.

4.7.2 Every opportunity will be given throughout each academic year for students/staff to disclose any disabilities or learning difficulties or other needs relating to 'protected characteristics' that they may have. The College will, through a culture of inclusivity, ensure an environment in which people feel able and confident to disclose and to see disclosure as the right course of action. The College will seek to provide reasonable adjustments in response to disclosure.

4.7.3 All providers of work-based learning under contract to the College and those contracting with the College will be made aware of the College Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and related policies and will be expected to comply with them. Equity and Diversity issues will be raised in College visits to employers and with students on work-based learning.

4.7.4 Work-based students (including Apprentices) will be empowered and supported to challenge practices and behaviours in the workplace which they feel contravene College policy in relation to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

4.8 Meeting the Needs and Interests of Students

4.8.1 In valuing and taking the prior attainment and experience of students into account the College will promote activity and experience undertaken within ethnic, religious or other cultural communities.

4.8.2 The College will support the development of community cohesion and community development through partnership with other organisations including statutory and community/voluntary organisations.

4.8.3 Opportunities to celebrate diversity and to share experiences and knowledge will be offered via curriculum and cross College activity. Based on consultation and need, the College will support development of student networks e.g., Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBTQ+) group, to further equality objectives relating to protected characteristics.

4.9 Student Guidance and Support

4.9.1 Information, advice and guidance will be delivered in ways accessible to different groups with protected characteristics and in ways that challenge stereotypes and equip students to defend their rights to fair treatment.

4.9.2 Support services will meet the needs of students from diverse backgrounds and communities.

5 Consultation and Participation

- 5.1 The College wishes to provide the highest standard of access in all consultation processes. Consultation and participation enable the College to better meet and serve the needs of all existing and potential service users. The College will consult with a range of organisations/individuals including staff, students and wider stakeholders.

6 Training and Development

- 6.1 Equity and Diversity training is a mandatory requirement for all employees of the College and is it is an annual requirement to update this training. There is additional and ongoing staff development throughout each year via targeted activity with various stakeholders and partners to ensure that awareness is much more than meeting legislation and this acts to maintain a vibrant ongoing conversation and positive culture.

7 Monitoring

- 7.1 The effectiveness of this Policy will be monitored through College leadership and Governance through formal committees such as Corporation, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings.

8 Related Policies and Procedures

- CMA's Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Strategy 2020 to 2024
- Equal Pay Action Plans
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy
- Gender Pay Gap Report
- Single Equality Scheme