



Walsall College

# Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDI-B)

## Policy and Procedure

Bringing talent to life...

DEPARTMENT	QUALITY
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Summary of Changes (**Highlighted** and Hyperlinked)

Section/Page	Description	Rationale
<a href="#">4</a>	<a href="#">Policy Statement &amp; addition of ICARE</a>	Updated college values (ICARE)
19	Definition of Key Terms	New section added to include Key Terminology.

## 1. Our Vision and Purpose

In January 2025 the College launched its new Vision and Purpose 2025- 2030, adding simplicity and clarity so that all of our communities could engage and feel represented. Extensive consultation with staff and students but also parents, employers and wider communities over several weeks has resulted in a shared vision and shared values which will unite and drive the College for the next five years.

***Our Vision: Transforming lives and our communities through learning***

***Our Purpose: To deliver excellent, inclusive learning which empowers students with skills and confidence to thrive in work and in life***

Walsall College is committed to inclusion, respect, and enabling all students and staff to reach their full potential. This policy has been developed in consultation with trade unions, staff, and students, and outlines our vision and commitment to EDI-B, legal duties, equality objectives, and practical steps for implementation.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Walsall College staff, students, volunteers, contractors, employers, and partners across all sites and premises. All are expected to comply with and benefit from this policy. The Principal and Chief Executive, along with the Senior Management Team, are responsible for its effective implementation.

## 3. Governance and Leadership Responsibility

The Principal and Chief Executive hold overall responsibility for this policy. The Board and College leadership are expected to demonstrate the highest levels of professional integrity, acting in the best interests of the College and its students. The Assistant Principal for Quality and the Head of Human Resources share operational responsibility for ensuring the policy remains up-to-date and aligned with the College's strategic direction.

The Board is responsible for:

- Setting and monitoring equality objectives.
- Ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks.
- Holding senior leadership accountable for creating and maintaining an inclusive environment.

## 4. Policy Statement and Shared Values

Our vision is for all staff and students to flourish and have a fair and equal opportunity to reach their potential. We aim to exceed statutory requirements, foster an inclusive corporate culture, and work collaboratively to deliver and surpass our EDI-B responsibilities.

### **Our five shared values:**

1. **Inclusive** - we celebrate diversity, creating an environment where everyone feels they belong, are respected and valued

2. **Collaborative** - we value teamwork and open communication, a catalyst for collaboration
3. **Accountable** - we own our actions and decisions, fostering trust and transparency throughout our organisation
4. **Resilient** – we adapt and thrive in the face of change, ensuring sustained performance and continuous growth
5. **Enterprising** - we embrace proactivity and innovation, actively encouraging fresh thinking and initiative

## 5. Equality Duties

Walsall College welcomes its Public Sector Equality Duties to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations between different groups.

We will:

- Publish equality objectives at least every four years.
- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Work with partners who share our commitment to equality.

## 6. Meeting Legal Duties

We comply with the Equality Act 2010 and all relevant legislation, ensuring no discrimination based on protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. We conduct regular pay audits and publish Gender Pay Gap Reports, taking appropriate action to address inequalities.

## 7. Provision of Services, Functions, and Associations

We provide reasonable adjustments for staff, students, and customers experiencing barriers due to disability or other protected characteristics. Recruitment, retention, and achievement are monitored by protected characteristics to identify trends and provide targeted support. Admissions policies promote non-discriminatory access and inclusivity. All forms of bullying, harassment, and discrimination are challenged in accordance with College policies.

## 8. The Quality of Provision

All teaching and training resources must reflect and promote EDI-B. Students and staff are encouraged to disclose disabilities or other needs, and reasonable adjustments are provided. Work-based learning providers and contractors are required to comply with College EDI-B policies.

## 9. Meeting the Needs and Interests of Students

We value the prior attainment and experience of students and promote activities that support community cohesion and development. We support the formation of student networks (e.g., LGBTQ+) and celebrate diversity through curriculum and cross-College activities.



## 10. Student Guidance and Support

Information, advice, and guidance are delivered in accessible ways that challenge stereotypes and support fair treatment. Support services are tailored to meet the needs of diverse student backgrounds.

## 11. Consultation and Participation

We consult with staff, students, and wider stakeholders to ensure our services meet the needs of all users. Feedback is actively sought and used to improve our policies and practices.

## 12. Training and Capacity Building

- **Mandatory annual training** for all employees, including modules on unconscious bias, anti-oppression, inclusive leadership, and microaggressions.
- **Onboarding EDI-B training** for all new hires.
- **Ongoing staff development** through targeted activities with stakeholders and partners.
- **Annual review** of training content to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

## 13. Monitoring, Accountability, and Enforcement

- **Compliance Monitoring:** The EDI-B Committee, in collaboration with the Senior Management Team, will monitor compliance through regular audits and reviews.
- **Reporting:** All departments must submit quarterly EDI-B progress reports.
- **Consequences for Non-Compliance:** Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal or contract termination.
- **Complaint Resolution:** Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days and resolved within 30 working days, where possible.
- **Audit Cycle:** Annual EDI-B audits will be conducted, with findings reported to the Board.

## 14. Measurable Goals and Evaluation

- **Representation Targets:** Our EDI-B annual report is published on our website so that all communities can see our analysis, review and our ambition as set out in EDI-B objectives, for example, to increase representation of underrepresented groups in staff and leadership roles.
- **Training Completion Rates:** 100% of staff to complete mandatory annual EDI-B training.
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):**
  - Reduction in reported incidents of discrimination.
  - Improvement in staff and student survey scores on inclusion and belonging.
  - Closing of gaps in terms of recruitment, retain and achievement across all protected characteristics.
  - Ensure no student group is disadvantaged in their ability to progress into jobs and further study (analysis of destinations data).
  - Number of accessible events and materials produced.

- **Reporting Cycle:** Annual EDI-B report published each July, with quarterly updates to the Board.

## 15. Community Engagement and Stakeholder Inclusion

- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Regular surveys and forums for students, staff, and community stakeholders.
- **External Collaboration:** Partnerships with equity experts, consultants, and local community organisations.
- **Inclusive Partnerships:** Annual review of partnerships to ensure inclusivity and mutual benefit.

## 16. Intersectionality

We recognise that individuals may experience discrimination based on multiple, intersecting identities (e.g., race and disability). Our strategies are tailored to address complex, intersecting barriers, ensuring all voices are heard and supported.

## 17. Accessibility

We are committed to physical and digital accessibility, including:

- Accessible documents and communications.
- Reasonable accommodations in hiring, events, and learning environments.
- Regular accessibility audits and improvements.

## 18. Confidentiality

All complaints and sensitive information are handled confidentially and securely, in accordance with GDPR and College data protection policies. Only those directly involved in the resolution process will have access to confidential information.

## 19. Definitions of Key Terms

- **Systemic Racism:** Policies and practices entrenched in established institutions that result in the exclusion or promotion of designated groups.
- **Allyship:** Active support for the rights and inclusion of marginalised groups.
- **Microaggressions:** Everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights or insults that communicate hostile or negative messages to marginalised individuals.
- **Psychological Safety:** A climate in which people feel safe to express themselves without fear of negative consequences.

## 20. Review Schedule

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or organisational needs.

## **21. EDI-B Champion Team and EDI-B Committee**

An EDI-B Committee, as well as a separate team of EDI-B Champions from each department, will be established to:

- Drive EDI-B initiatives.
- Collect and respond to feedback.
- Monitor progress and report to leadership.

## **22. Related Policies and Procedures**

- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Annual Report
- Equal Pay Action Plans
- Gender Pay Gap Report
- Single Equality Scheme
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Student Support Policy and Procedure

**For further information, or to provide feedback on this policy, please contact the Quality Team at [qualityteam@walsallcollege.ac.uk](mailto:qualityteam@walsallcollege.ac.uk)**