



## Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

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<b>Related policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Complaints and Appeals Policy</li> <li>– Admissions Policy</li> <li>– Safeguarding &amp; Prevent Policy</li> <li>– Staff Development Policy</li> <li>– Academic Misconduct Policy</li> <li>– Staff Handbook</li> <li>– Disability Policy</li> <li>– Corporate Social Responsibility Policy</li> </ul>
<b>External reference points</b>	Sustainable Development Goals (2015): 4 Quality Education, 5 Gender Equality, 10 Reduced Inequalities.

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## 1. Purpose

The College values the diversity of our learning and teaching community and is committed to promoting equality of opportunities for students and staff, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion or socio-economic background and equality of opportunity for a diverse workforce that is equipped with the skills necessary to achieve our shared ambitions. Respect for diversity and the promotion of equality is central to our mission, as we strive 'to provide students within local communities with the holistic education they need to improve their life chances'. Our vision also identifies our desire 'to become a foremost provider of the complete education journey, supporting adults from basic skills courses up to university degrees and career success'. We are committed to ensuring there is an environment that is free from discrimination, violence, harassment & bullying, offering dignity and respect for everyone.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy sets out the College's commitment to an inclusive and supportive environment for students, staff, contractors, and visitors that is free from discrimination. It explains how we intend to respond to the Equality Act (2010), by continuing to show due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations for all our stakeholders.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all the College's stakeholders, including staff (full-time, part-time, or sessional staff), students, volunteers, and governors. This policy demonstrates our commitment to go beyond compliance with equality legislation.

This policy aims to inform stakeholders, clearly and simply, about the College's objectives and responsibilities for furthering and promoting Equality and Diversity at the College over the next three years. The objectives include the following:

### 2.1. Prevent discrimination

To actively prevent discrimination, harassment, victimization, and other abusive conduct

### 2.2. Inclusive environment

To ensure that students and staff can thrive in an inclusive environment which welcomes and supports them.

### 2.3. Equal opportunities for development

To ensure everyone can make the best of their strengths and overcome challenges with equal opportunities for growth and development.

### 2.4. Best practice in Equality and Diversity

To strive towards best practice in our approach to Equality and Diversity across all the College's functions.

### 2.5. Corporate Social Responsibility

To work towards achieving corporate social responsibility objectives in support of sustainable development Goals 4 Quality Education, 5 Gender Equality and 10 Reduced Inequalities

### 3. Protected Characteristics

Discrimination of any kind in the working environment will not be tolerated and the College will take all necessary action to prevent its occurrence. Specifically, the College aims to ensure that no employee or student is subject to unlawful discrimination, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds all the protected characteristics in the Equality act 2010:

- Age
- Gender & gender reassignment
- Marriage & civil partnership
- Pregnancy & maternity
- Race
- Religion & belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Disability

This commitment applies to all aspects including:

- Student applications
- Recruitment and selection, including admissions, placement interviews and selection procedures
- Training / Teaching
- Promotion and career-development opportunities
- Grievance handling and the application of disciplinary procedures
- Selection for redundancy

Equal opportunities practice is developing constantly as social attitudes and legislation change. The College will review all policies and implement necessary changes where these could improve equality of opportunity and give due regard for the prevention of discrimination at Trent Education Centre.

The College affirms its intention to act on its responsibilities concerning discrimination in substance, with rigour and an open mind in such a way that it influences decision making at all levels. This includes ensuring that all staff are trained in equality and diversity and are equipped to ensure that we are delivering on our objectives.

Having due regard to advancing equality of opportunity will include, for example, monitoring and eliminating achievement gaps through close review of enrolment practice, teaching and learning. Relevant staff will be held to account for reducing any achievement gaps that are identified through College provision.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations will include, for example, ensuring that teachers embed the promotion of equality and diversity themes confidently and successfully in lessons, challenge stereotypes and ensure that all students are fully equipped to live and work in a contemporary and diverse setting.

## 4. Recruitment

- The College will seek to ensure that all job applicants and staff are treated fairly, with respect and without bias. No applicant or member of staff will be approached less favourably than another because of his or her age, disability, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, caring or parental responsibilities, religious or philosophical beliefs.
- All staff members who are involved in short-listing or interviewing job applicants, or involved in other selection processes, should be aware of the College's policies on equality and diversity and will have undertaken recruitment and selection training.
- All students and staff are responsible for ensuring that they act in accordance with this policy during their everyday work or study, ensuring that everyone can expect dignity and respect, without discrimination.
- Abusive language or behaviour will be dealt with. In serious cases students can be suspended or expelled, and for staff it could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.
- Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 - which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.
- Students with declared disabilities will be invited to discuss additional support that the College can provide.
- Decisions affecting staff conditions will be based solely on job-related ability and merit. Decisions affecting student learning will be considered by the Academic Board in relation to the student's programme of study.

### 4.1. Recruitment of ex-offenders

The College actively promotes equality of opportunity for all candidates, including those with criminal records where appropriate. The College requires job applicants to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the application process. Any such information should be sent in a separate confidential letter to the designated person. Only those who need to see it as a formal part of the recruitment process will have access to this information.

Any recruitment decision will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offence(s). The College will discuss with applicants the relevance of any offence to the job in question.

If an applicant fails to reveal any information relating to disclosures, an offer of employment may be withdrawn.

## **4.2. Career development**

While positive measures may be taken to encourage all students from all disciplines to apply for employment opportunities, all selections for jobs will be solely based upon merit.

All students and faculty members will have equal access to training and opportunities for career development organised by the College, which are appropriate to their experience and abilities.

## **5. Single Equality Scheme 2024-25**

The College aims to promote equality of opportunity, fairness and diversity and reduce discrimination. The Single Equality Scheme (SES) also responds to the new single public sector equality duty (PSED), which requires all public authorities to:

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The SES involves students, staff, and stakeholders and we will engage with students, staff and stakeholders to develop an SES Action Plan.

### **5.1. Promoting the Colleges SES**

- Deal with any form of discrimination of race, disability, gender/transgender, age, religion or belief or sexual orientation.
- Ensure that all policies and procedures incorporate the different needs of individuals.
- Expand opportunities for all staff to attend training.
- Provide a safe environment where everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect.
- Ensure the curriculum challenges and addresses discrimination.
- Incorporate Equality Impact Assessments in the College Annual Self-Assessment Report.
- Obtain feedback and respond to it.
- Monitor admissions and student progress in relation to demographics.
- Ensure that when purchasing products or services from external providers, equality, diversity and inclusion is reflected in the tendering process.

### **5.2. Monitoring the SES**

The College Annual Academic Monitoring Review (AAMR) will review the College students and staff by ethnicity, gender, disability, and age, in terms of student admission and achievement and staff profile and success at interview. A gap analysis will be included in the AAMR, and this informs the Annual Development Plan.

## 6. Monitoring & Enhancement

The College will employ a variety of means to achieve its aims under this policy and to pursue excellence in meeting its responsibilities and objectives for equality and diversity. Data will be collected confidentially and anonymously on staff and student demographics, including all the following protected characteristics listed above.

In addition, the following (not exhaustive) list of data will be gathered annually:

### ***Student Data***

- Student enrolment
- Achievement, retention and success rates
- Applications
- Admissions/offer letters
- Conversion rates from applications to admissions to enrolment
- Cancellation/withdrawal rates
- Access to student services
- Access to student enrichment activities
- Disciplinary action, complaints and incidents of harassment/bullying

### ***Employee Data***

- Employee numbers
- Grade and category of staff including full and part-time status
- Applications for appointment
- Shortlisted candidates
- Appointments and promotions
- Type of contract (permanent, fixed term)
- Employee relations; grievance, disciplinary, harassment, capability, complaints
- Leavers
- Training and staff development opportunities
- Requests for flexible working
- Return rates from maternity leave and the roles to which staff return
- Pay levels
- Profile of those with dependents and caring responsibilities
- Staff attendance at Continuing Professional Development (CPD), especially CPD related to Equality and Diversity.

Collected data will be used to inform and influence decisions taken by the Academic Board in relation to student recruitment, enrolments, and progress, and by the Senior Management Team in relation to staff recruitment, appraisals, and promotion. The data will be included in the Annual Quality Report and Development Plan compiled by the Head of Quality and presented to the Academic Board every year. In addition to regular monitoring and evaluation processes, the College will carry out monitoring whenever necessary, for example as the result of an issue that may have been raised. This will ensure that the College is able to promote greater equality and diversity in all aspects of the College's provision, which include but is not limited to learning, teaching and assessment; management and governance; admissions, access and participation; behaviour and discipline; staff recruitment and training.

## **7. Responsibilities**

### **7.1. Policy Review**

The Senior Management Team is responsible for the overall review and implementation of this policy, creating a respectful College environment and an inclusive culture which genuinely supports people's differences and values diverse contributions. They are also tasked with upholding the highest standards of personal behaviour and conduct, leading by example and for the setting and enforcing of standards in the College. In so doing, they will provide an atmosphere where staff and students feel free to declare their personal characteristics.

### **7.2. Monitoring of Equality and Diversity**

Activity in relation to equality and diversity of student applications, enrolments, and achievements, will be monitored by the Head of Quality reporting to the MD and presented in a quarterly report.

In relation to equality and diversity of applicants for job vacancies and staff demographics at every level of the organisation, equality and diversity will be managed and monitored by the Human Resource Manager, reporting to the Head of Operations and presented in a quarterly report to the Senior Management Team.

### **7.3. Staff**

Staff are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with the Equality Act 2010 and are expected to participate in training, briefing, awareness-raising sessions, and to report any instance of discrimination or unfair treatment to their line manager.

Staff are expected to behave in accordance with this policy and the College's core values. Staff should respect and value the rights of colleagues and students to keep sensitive personal information private and should not disclose such information without the express permission of the person concerned.

For any concerns under the Prevent guidance (Safeguarding and Prevent Policy), staff must follow the Channel process.



#### **7.4. Students**

Students are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy and to report any instance of discrimination or unfair treatment to a Student Support Officer, their Tutor or any Manager, Head, or member of the Senior Management Team. Students are expected to behave in accordance with this policy and the College's core values.

Students should respect and value the rights of colleagues and other students to keep sensitive personal information private and should not disclose such information without the express permission of the person concerned, except where concerns relating to Prevent are raised.

#### **7.5. Key staff**

Key staff having designated responsibilities for equality and diversity:

The MD: [zaheer@trenteducation.co.uk](mailto:zaheer@trenteducation.co.uk) provides overall leadership of Equality and Diversity in the College and is responsible for leading on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Development Plan

### **8. Communication & Training**

All staff within the College will discuss this updated policy at team meetings. This policy will also be discussed by the Academic Board. If further training on its contents is needed, this will be arranged by the Human Resources Manager so that all staff are fully aware of this policy and their responsibilities.

### **9. Review & Monitoring of Policy**

The MD and Head of Quality with the support of the Senior Management Team, will review and monitor the policy and procedures every year, and implement approved changes where necessary. A revised version of the policy will be submitted to the Senior Management Team within three years, or when required, to ensure that any identified deficiencies or weaknesses have been dealt with without delay.

### **10. Complaints of Discrimination**

The College will treat seriously all complaints of discrimination made by employees, clients, customers, suppliers, contractors or other third parties and will act where appropriate. If a stakeholder or student believes that they have been discriminated against, they are encouraged to raise the matter as soon as possible with their manager, tutor, or member of the Senior Management Team.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated thoroughly. If an allegation of discrimination is made, the College is committed to ensuring that complainants are protected from victimisation, harassment, or less favourable treatment.