



## Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Policy no:	<b>4.1</b>
Version date	August 2025
Responsible Person	Sam Cook
Approved by	Senior Management Team
Version number	V04
Next review due	August 2026
External reference points	<a href="#">Equality Action 2010</a> <a href="#">Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)</a> United Nations SDG Reducing Inequalities and Gender Equality.

Version Control			
Previous Version	New Version	Date	Update/Notes
V3 (28/10/24)	V4	01-08-25	<p>Reference to the new Sexual Harassment Policy.</p> <p>Quarterly report on EDI submitted to the Academic Board is amended to an Annual Monitoring Report by the Head of Quality on EDI in relation to students submitted to the Academic Board and an Annual Monitoring Report by the HR Manager on EDI in relation to staff and other stakeholders submitted to the Senior Management Team.</p> <p>Both reports inform the Annual Academic Monitoring Review (AAMR) submitted at the end of the calendar year to the Academic Board for review and then to the Board of Governors for approval.</p>

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## **1. Introduction**

Trent Education Centre (TEC) cultivates a community of students, staff and other stakeholders that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve, offering equal and equitable access to higher education for students and work opportunities for staff and other stakeholders. TEC embraces the diversity of its learning and teaching community and is dedicated to fostering equal opportunities and equal respect for all, regardless of background or characteristics. TEC strives to maintain a safe, inclusive environment where discrimination, bullying, harassment (including sexual harassment), and threats of verbal abuse or physical violence have no place. Everyone at TEC must be treated with respect and dignity and they must treat all others the same. TEC expects all members of its community to celebrate the individual differences of members within our community.

## **2. Purpose and Scope**

This policy affirms TEC's commitment to upholding the principles of the Equality Act 2010 in all of our locations by working to eliminate discrimination, enhance access to opportunities, and nurture positive relationships across our community wherever we are operating. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy outlines TEC's pledge to employ inclusive practices to support prospective students, active students, alumni, staff, and other stakeholders including non-executive board and committee members, contractors, and visitors.

## **3. Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all students, staff and other stakeholders at TEC embrace the key principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as stated in the single equality scheme of the public sector equality duty (PSED) as outlined below:

- Prevent and address all forms of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other unlawful behaviour.
- Enhance fair access to opportunities for all people, ensuring no-one is disadvantaged compared to others in any way.
- Promote an environment and culture of inclusion, which is welcoming and equitable for people of all the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 as follows:
  - Age
  - Gender & gender reassignment
  - Marriage & civil partnership
  - Pregnancy & maternity
  - Race
  - Religion & belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation
  - Disability

### 3.1. Student perspective

From the student perspective, the principle of **equality** is underpinned by TEC's equitable approach to education as set out in TEC's **Mission Statement**: *To provide students in local communities with the holistic education they need to enhance their life-chances.*

TEC's holistic approach to education addresses the inequality of opportunity faced by students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups, including mature students from low participation areas and communities, who require a range of additional support services to access and succeed in higher education and progress into further studies or gainful employment.

The principles of **diversity and inclusion** are captured in TEC's core values of **Inclusion**: *widening participation so that no one gets left behind*, and **Sustainability**: *securing a future for individuals, their families, and communities*. These values show TEC's commitment to empowering a more diverse range of people to access and succeed in higher education for the benefit of themselves, their families and their communities.

### 3.2. Staff perspective

This policy also aims to promote equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) for its staff and other stakeholders, by providing equitable opportunities for people of all backgrounds to work at TEC, gain promotion and continuous professional development on equal terms with all other staff and stakeholders.

TEC achieves its aims through the following objectives:

### 3.3. EDI objectives for all

- To actively prevent bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment. see TEC's **Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy** and **Sexual Harassment Policy** for more information.
- To invest in key united nations sustainable development Goals SDG including (4) Quality Education, (5) Gender Equality and (10) Reduced Inequalities.
- To monitor and review equality, diversity and inclusion in board and committee meetings.
- Conduct annual evaluation and analysis of student performance data to ensure that risks to equality of opportunity are identified and intervention strategies are recommended to the Board of Governors by the Audit and Risk Committee.
- Track admissions and student outcomes with attention to demographic data.
- Ensure that procurement processes for external products or services uphold principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Gather feedback from students, staff and other stakeholders and take appropriate action in response.
- Include Equality Impact Assessments as part of the TEC Annual Self-Assessment Report.

### 3.4. EDI Objectives for Students

- To ensure that all potential students have equal access to accurate and complete information on the courses TEC offers.
- To ensure that all applicants have equal opportunity to apply for courses and to meet the entry requirements on an equitable basis. This includes providing additional support for applicants with disabilities or special educational needs.
- To ensure that all students are treated fairly during their studies and have equal and equitable access to all teaching, learning and assessments as well as academic and pastoral student support services
- To ensure that students with disabilities or special educational needs receive appropriate accommodations during assessments and examinations. See the TEC **Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policy**.
- To provide all students with the following fair, accessible and equitable policies and procedures: **Complaints and Appeals, Academic Appeals, Student Discipline, Fitness to Study and Academic Misconduct**.

### 3.5. EDI Objectives for Staff and other Stakeholders

- To ensure that all existing staff can apply for any job vacancies at TEC when they become available by applying TEC's **Safer Recruitment Policy**.
- To ensure that all job vacancies open to the wider public are available on the TEC website and proactively encourage people from all backgrounds to apply, including people with disabilities
- To ensure a fair, equitable and transparent process for the selection, recruitment and remuneration of all staff and other stakeholders where relevant, such non-executive members of boards and committees.
- To ensure that all staff receive training on the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion
- To ensure that the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded into the curriculum.
- To ensure that teaching staff incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion into their teaching practice, challenging any form of discrimination or stereotyping.
- To ensure that professional service staff apply the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in all their activities.
- To provide all staff with relevant opportunities for relevant continuous professional development.
- To provide a fair, transparent and equitable process for handling staff performance appraisals, staff discipline and dealing with staff grievances. See the TEC **Staff Appraisal Policy, Staff Disciplinary Policy** and **Staff Handbook** for further information.

## **4. Staff Recruitment**

### **4.1. Recruitment staff**

TEC wishes to ensure that its staff recruitment processes are fully impartial and that no individual who applies for a position at TEC faces less favourable treatment due to any protected characteristic. All applicants must be treated equally with dignity and respect whether they are new or existing staff. Staff members involved in recruitment activities, such as shortlisting, interviewing, or other selection procedures must be familiar with this policy and the TEC **Safer Recruitment Policy**. They must also complete appropriate training before participating in the recruitment and selection of candidates.

### **4.2. Job vacancies**

Existing staff are informed about any job vacancies they can apply for. If jobs are offered publicly, the vacancy for the position is put on the TEC website and existing staff are invited to apply for it. While positive measures may be taken to encourage all staff to apply for employment opportunities and all selections for jobs will be solely based upon merit. All staff will have equal access to training and opportunities for career development organised by TEC, which are appropriate to their experience and abilities.

### **4.3. Applicants with Disabilities**

TEC champions equal access to employment opportunities for all applicants, including those disabilities and special needs TEC will make reasonable adjustments where possible for staff with disabilities or special needs. Job applicants will not be dismissed without fair consideration of their application and suitability for the position applied for. TEC selects candidates solely on the basis of how appropriate they are for the job and how well they are able to do the job taking into account any reasonable adjustments TEC can make to accommodate any disabilities. Only merit-based decisions affect staff selection and the terms and conditions of employment that are offered to candidates.

### **4.4. Applicants with Criminal Records**

Applicants with criminal records may be selected to work at TEC, provided there is no risk to safety. Applicants are required to disclose any criminal convictions early in the application process. This information should be submitted in a separate, confidential letter addressed to the designated contact. Access to this information will be strictly limited to those directly involved in the recruitment process. Failure to disclose relevant information may result in the withdrawal of a job offer.

## 5. Code of Behaviour

All students, staff and other stakeholders are expected to uphold this policy in their daily activities, fostering an environment where dignity, respect, and freedom from discrimination expected normative behaviour. Any use of abusive language or inappropriate behaviour will be addressed accordingly. In severe instances, students may face suspension or expulsion, while staff could be subject to disciplinary action for gross misconduct, including dismissal without notice.

Sexual harassment may constitute both a breach of employment rights and a criminal offence, particularly in cases involving allegations of sexual assault. Harassment at work may be considered a criminal act regardless of whether it involves a protected characteristic as stated in the Protection against Harassment Act 1997. Students should consult the **Student Disciplinary Policy** and staff should consult the **Staff Disciplinary Policy** for information on expected behaviour from students and staff and how TEC deals with breaches of its expected code of behaviour. Students and staff should also refer to the **Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy** and the **Sexual Harassment Policy** for more information on how to behave in accordance with the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.

## 6. Students with Disabilities and Special Education Needs

TEC Head of Safeguarding and Health and Safety will be informed if any student discloses a disability or special educational need. The Head of Safeguarding and Health and Safety will maintain a record of disclosures and make sure the applicants or students receive all the support they need. Tutors and Heads of Programme will be informed and where possible, TEC staff will seek to accommodate the specific needs of such students during learning, teaching and assessment. See the Special considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policy for more information.

## **7. Monitoring & Enhancement**

The Head of Quality completes and submits an annual monitoring report on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for students and submits it to the Academic Board for approval and amendment if needed and then to the Board of Governors by the end of the calendar year. This report forms part of the TEC Annual Academic Monitoring Review (AAMR). The report includes an analysis of student performance according to different characteristics including ethnicity, gender, disability, and age. Key aspects included in the analysis are student admissions and interview success rates, attendance and engagement, retention, pass rates and grading classifications, continuation and completion rates and progression into further studies or gainful employment. A gap analysis is conducted to identify where there may be risks to the equality of opportunities for different demographic groups and their protected characteristics.

The HR Manager completes and submits an annual report on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for staff and other stakeholders, which is submitted to the Senior Management Team for approval and amendment if needed and then to the Board of Governors by the end of the calendar year. This includes an analysis of staff demographics at TEC based upon confidential and anonymous data of individual employees. This analysis considers the success rates of job applicants from different backgrounds and the turnover rates of each group identified.

The following data is collected for the AAMR

### **7.1. Student Data**

#### **Student Journey & Admissions**

- Volume of student applications received
- Volume of conditional and unconditional letters sent to students
- Volume of applications that are converted to enrolment
- Total student enrolment figures
- Cancellation and withdrawal rates

#### **Performance & Outcomes**

- Attendance and engagement
- Student retention
- Student continuation
- Student completion
- Student progression

#### **Student Experience & Support**

- Availability and accessibility of student services
- Participation in student enrichment and extracurricular activities



## **Conduct & Wellbeing**

- Records of disciplinary actions, complaints, and incidents involving harassment or bullying

## **7.2. Employee Data**

### **Workforce Composition & Structure**

- Number of staff employed whether full or part time.
- Types of employment contracts (e.g. permanent, fixed-term)
- Pay levels across roles
- Profile of employees with dependents or caring responsibilities

### **Recruitment & Progression**

- Number of job applications received
- Candidates shortlisted for roles
- Appointments made and internal promotions
- Employee departures and turnover

### **Workplace Policies & Relations**

- Requests for flexible working arrangements
- Return rates from maternity leave and roles resumed
- Employee relations, including grievances, disciplinary actions, harassment cases including sexual harassment, capability concerns, and complaints

### **Training & Professional Development**

- Access to training and staff development programmes
- Participation in Continuing Professional Development (CPD), with emphasis on Equality and Diversity-related CPD

Data collected plays a key role in guiding decisions made by the Academic Board regarding student admissions and teaching, learning and assessment. Similarly, the Senior Management Team will use this information to inform staff-related decisions, including staff recruitment, performance appraisals, and promotions.

Each year, the Head of Quality will incorporate this data into the AAMR and Development Plan, which is then submitted to the Academic Board for review and to the Board of Governors for approval.

## 8. Allegations of Discrimination

The Senior Management Team will treat allegations of discrimination very seriously. Students or staff who believe they are a victim of discrimination may send an email to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): [sam@trenteducation.co.uk](mailto:sam@trenteducation.co.uk) or Phone the DSL on 07868 216222. Alternatively, they can follow the instructions below:

### 8.1. Staff

The MD: [zaheer@trenteducation.co.uk](mailto:zaheer@trenteducation.co.uk) provides overall leadership of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at TEC.

All staff are expected to attend training on equality, diversity and inclusion. They must ensure they know and understand this policy and treat all members of the TEC community accordingly. Staff should inform their line manager or other senior member of staff if they observe any behaviour that is in breach of this policy, such as discrimination against any other person. Staff may also follow the Staff Grievance Policy in the Staff Handbook if they prefer.

**Alternatively, staff may report an allegation of discrimination or other safeguarding concern including sexual misconduct to the Designated Safeguarding Lead:**

[sam@trenteducation.co.uk](mailto:sam@trenteducation.co.uk)

Phone: 07868 216222

Staff need to be aware of the following related policies on the TEC website [here](#), and refer to them if required:

- Admissions Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Staff Grievance Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy

## 8.2. Students

All students should be informed about this policy during their induction and should read and make sure they understand it. Students should avoid any form of discrimination or stereotyping against another student, staff member or other stakeholder at TEC. If a student experiences any discrimination themselves, they should inform a member staff they feel comfortable talking to such as their Tutor or a Student Support Officer, or a Safeguarding Officer.

**Students may report an allegation of discrimination or other safeguarding concern including sexual misconduct to the Designated Safeguarding Lead:**

[sam@trenteducation.co.uk](mailto:sam@trenteducation.co.uk)

Phone: 07868 216222

Students may also follow the instructions on the TEC website on [How to Complain](#) or simply use the [Complaint Form](#) on the TEC website if they do not wish to speak directly about it to anyone. TEC staff will respond within two days and try to resolve the issue. For more information on what to do, students may read the following policies on the TEC website [here](#):

- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy

## 9. Policy Review

This policy should be reviewed and approved by the Senior Management Team (SMT) annually as a minimum. The SMT will review and update the policy whenever amendments are required and all students, staff and stakeholders will be notified.