

Equality and Diversity Policy		Policy Ref: SMBP026
1.	Purpose	
	<p>The purpose of this policy is to outline the SMB Group’s approach to ensuring that it provides an inclusive learning and working environment where everyone can reach their full potential, regardless of their background.</p> <p>It also sets out how the College will meet its Public Sector Equality Duty in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.</p>	
2.	Scope	
	<p>This policy applies to all members of the SMB Group community, including learners, employees, visitors, contractors and suppliers.</p>	
3.	Policy Statement	
	<p>Our policy is to ensure that all members of the College community receive no less favourable treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristic, thereby valuing diversity and enabling equality in employment, education and training and access to facilities and services.</p>	
4.	Responsibilities	
	<p>As defined in Section 6 of the Policy</p>	
5.	Equality and Diversity Impact	
	<p>The College has considered the Equality and Diversity implications in relation to this policy and does not consider that it unduly impacts on any protected group.</p>	
6.	Environmental Impact Assessment	
	<p>The College has considered environmental implications in relation to the rules and policies set out in this document. The College considers the environmental impact to be neutral.</p>	
7.	Data Protection Impact	
	<p>The impact of this policy on an individual’s data has been considered and necessary actions implemented</p>	
8.	Associated Policies, Processes, Procedures or Guidance	
	<p>The following are policies, processes, procedure or guidance which should be referred to alongside this policy:</p>	

Person Responsible for Policy Vice Principal Human Resources & Organisational Development

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Date Approved by SMT February 2020

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Version	Date	Status & changes	Author
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1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the College's approach to ensuring that it provides an inclusive learning and working environment where everyone can reach their full potential, regardless of their background.

1.2 It also sets out how the College will meet its Public Sector Equality Duty in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all members of the SMB Group community, including learners, employees, visitors, contractors and suppliers.

2.2 It is designed to help create an environment where equality, diversity and inclusion is naturally part of our everyday life and covers all aspects of College activity including:

- Learner recruitment and admissions, guidance and support
- Curriculum planning and delivery
- Teaching, learning and assessment
- Employee recruitment and professional development
- Procurement and outsourcing
- Contracts and supply of goods to the College
- Marketing and communications
- College environment and facilities
- Social Infrastructure
- Quality Assurance

3. Policy Statement and Commitment

3.1 SMB Group encourages and supports the development of a society in which:

- People's ability to achieve their potential is not limited by prejudice or discrimination
- There is respect for and protection of each individual's human rights
- There is respect for the dignity and worth of each individual
- Each individual has an equal opportunity to participate in society
- There is mutual respect between groups based on understanding and valuing of diversity and on shared respect for equality and human rights.

3.2 In support of this, the College strives to achieve a culture of excellence and innovation without exclusion and we are committed to making all of our provision widely accessible for all students.

- 3.3 Our policy is to ensure that all members of the College community receive no less favourable treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristic, thereby valuing diversity and enabling equality in employment, education and training and access to facilities and services.
- 3.4 Our overall intention is to help all learners and employees in creating a positive and happy learning and working environment, which is free from discrimination or harassment of any form.
- 3.5 The College will actively implement this policy to ensure that all learners, employees and visitors learn and work in an environment which provides a safe, appropriate and supportive environment in which all individuals are able to pursue successfully their chosen activities.
- 3.6 The College will ensure that governors, employees and learners are aware of the value placed on equality, diversity and inclusion, and that action will be taken in the event of any breach of this policy.

4. The Legislative Framework

- 4.1 The Equality Act 2010 places a Public Sector Equality Duty on the College. The College is required to have due regard to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.
- 4.2 The College also has a specific duty to:
- Publish information to show its compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty
 - Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years.
- 4.3 The College will publish all information in a way which makes it easily accessible.
- 4.4 The Act protects people from discrimination, harassment or victimisation based on 'protected characteristics'. These are:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender
 - Gender reassignment

- Marriage and Civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

4.5 The Act prohibits the following conduct, which is further defined in Appendix 1:

- Direct Discrimination
- Associative Discrimination
- Discrimination by perception
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation
- Discrimination arising from a disability

5. Definitions

5.1 Definitions of equality and diversity are detailed in Appendix 1. Further detailed definitions for protected characteristics and prohibited conduct, included in the Equality Act 2010, are also outlined in Appendix 1.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 All members of the College community have a responsibility to actively support the policy. In particular it is expected that they will:

- Understand and implement the policy
- Behave in a manner that recognises and respects the dignity and worth of each individual
- Challenge behaviour that is unacceptable and not in accordance with the College's policy

6.2 Notwithstanding the general responsibility outlined above, there are some specific responsibilities:

6.2.1 Governors

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the College meets its legal obligations in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. It will:

- Set and maintain the College's strategic direction in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Approve the College's Equality and Diversity Policy and Strategic Equality Objectives
- Monitor and review the implementation of the College's policy and ensure that the College meets its Public Sector Equality Duty

6.2.2 Principal/CEO and Executive Team

The Principal and Executive Team have overall responsibility for ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion within the College and will:

- Lead by example and proactively champion equality, diversity and inclusion and our shared values
- Ensure all aspects of this policy are effectively implemented, ensuring that the necessary resources and expertise is available
- Ensure that equality objectives are set and regularly reviewed and monitored
- Ensure that regular reports are provided to the Governing Body to monitor performance and progress
- Ensure that all employees receive appropriate training to enable them to discharge their responsibilities in the active promotion of equality and diversity

6.2.3 Managers

All Managers have a responsibility to support this policy and to ensure that their behaviour supports our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. They will:

- Lead by example, create a positive ethos and ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded into all aspects of their team's work
- Ensure that appropriate action is taken in support of the College's Strategic Equality Objectives and that targets are set and progress monitored
- Take action to ensure that Equality and Diversity is integral to the design, operation and delivery of all learning programmes and related College services
- Ensure that all programmes of learning are regularly reviewed and evaluated to ensure that they meet the needs of all students
- Ensure that Information, Advice and Guidance is open and transparent and that students are placed on courses where they can succeed
- Ensure that teaching, learning and assessment practice promotes equality, diversity and our shared values

6.2.4 Employees

All staff have a responsibility to support this policy and to ensure that their behaviour supports our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. They will:

- Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is an integral part of their role and the work they do
- Support and enable students to adhere to the policy

- Demonstrate sensitivity to issues of equality and diversity and attend staff training to support them in this area
- Take appropriate and timely action to address inappropriate behaviour and in the event of any incident of harassment, bullying, or unfair discrimination, alerting or involving senior staff, if necessary

6.2.5 Learners

Learners have a responsibility to adhere to the College's policy and will:

- Treat everyone with respect, dignity and fairness
- Value difference and recognise that everyone has a right to contribute and realise their full potential
- Behave at all times in a manner consistent with the College's policy
- Report any concerns for themselves and others
- Attend induction, enrichment and tutorial activities concerning equality and diversity and fulfil their responsibilities towards other students, staff and the wider College community
- Ensure that their coursework reflects sensitivity to issues of equality and diversity, reflects our shared values and does not include any discriminatory content.

7. Policy Aims and Strategic Equality Objectives

7.1 The College aims to:

- Promote equality and diversity across all its activities.
- Foster and promote good relations between people of a diverse background.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Encourage and widen participation, raise standards and advance aspiration for all.

7.2 In support of these aims and in accordance with its statutory duty, the College will agree a number of Strategic Equality Objectives, which will be reviewed every 4 years and will be published on the College's website.

8. Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

8.1 The Vice Principal Human Resources & Organisational Development will oversee the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy and report on progress against agreed Strategic Equality Objectives.

8.2 The Vice Principal Human Resources & Organisational Development will chair the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group and will produce an annual Equality and Diversity Report. The



Group will be accountable to the Executive Team and the Corporation, through the Quality and Standards Committee.

8.3 The Strategic Equality Objectives will be regularly reviewed and will be updated and published at least every four years, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

8.4 Actions agreed in support of the Strategic Equality Objectives will be incorporated into the College's Strategic and Quality Improvement Plans.

9. Equality and Diversity Impact

9.1 The College has considered the Equality and Diversity implications in relation to this policy and does not consider that it unduly impacts on any protected group.

Defining Terminology – Equality and Diversity

Equality

Ensuring that individuals or groups of individuals are treated fairly and equally and no less favourably, specific to their needs

Diversity

Aims to recognise, respect and value people’s differences to contribute and realise their full potential, by promoting an inclusive culture for all

Defining Terminology – Prohibited Conduct

Direct discrimination	Someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a particular protected characteristic
Associative discrimination	Direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who has a particular protected characteristic
Discrimination by perception	Direct discrimination against someone because the other think they possess a particular protected characteristic
Indirect discrimination	Can occur when an organisation has a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages people with a particular protected characteristic
Discrimination arising from disability	Someone with a disability is treated unfavourably because of something arising in consequence of their disability Note – this is not unlawful if the organization does not know, and could not reasonably be expected to know, that the person has the disability
Harassment	Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating and intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual Note – the conduct does not have to be repeated, directed at them or aimed at upsetting them

Harassment by a third party	Employers are potentially liable for harassment of their staff by people they do not employ
Victimisation	Someone is treated unfairly because they have made or intend to make a complaint about discrimination or harassment or they have supported someone making a complaint about discrimination or harassment

Defining Terminology – Protected Characteristics

Age	The protected characteristic of age means a person belonging to a particular age group. This includes people of the same age and people of a particular range of ages. E.g. 'over 50s' or '21 year olds'.
Disability	A disabled person is described in the Equality Act 2010 as one who has a physical or mental impairment, which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
Gender	The word 'gender' is often used in place of the word 'sex' in equality issues. 'Gender' does not appear in legislation (except for 'gender re-assignment' – see below) but 'sex discrimination' and 'gender discrimination' are generally interchangeable.
Gender Reassignment	A process undertaken under medical supervision for the purpose of reassigning a person's sex by changing physiological or other characteristics of sex.
Marriage and civil partnership	Marriage is defined as a union between a man and a woman or, in England, Wales and Scotland, two people of the same sex. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters. Protection from discrimination for being married or in a civil partnership is provided in employment and vocational training only.
Pregnancy and maternity	Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding

<p>Race</p> <p>Religion and Belief</p> <p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>Race' includes colour, nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins. A racial group can also be made up of two or more distinct racial groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Religion: means any religion and includes a lack of religion. It is for the courts to determine what constitutes a religion. ▶ Meaning of belief: Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Examples of philosophical beliefs include Humanism and Atheism. A belief need not include faith or worship of a God or Gods, but must affect how a person lives their life or perceives the world. <p>Whether a person is attracted to people of their own sex, the opposite sex or both sexes. Assumptions and perceptions of a person's sexuality are also covered by law.</p>
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