

Disability Policy

1. Policy Statement

The College is committed to providing equal opportunity of access to all resources, facilities and opportunities according to an individual's needs. The College Disability Policy will ensure that people with disabilities, both physical and hidden, are not treated less favourably in any processes, practices and service delivery. The College will treat all people with respect and dignity, and seek to provide a positive environment, free from disability discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Disability discrimination prevents people from realising their full potential in the learning environment, workplace and society. Disability equality will help the College deliver better services to its students, staff and local community.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to the whole College, including students, Governors, staff, and visitors and works in conjunction with the College Single Equality Scheme. It applies to individuals with both hidden and physical disabilities.

- **Governors** are responsible for ensuring that the College complies with Disability legislation, and for approving and reviewing the Disability Policy and monitoring its implementation.
- **The Principal** is responsible for giving a consistent and high-profile lead on disability equality issues, promoting the Disability Policy inside and outside the institution and making sure the Disability Policy is followed.
- **The Human Resources Department** is responsible for the monitoring and implementation of all aspects of this Policy relating to the employment of staff. This includes the monitoring of fair selection processes and their impact on the staff profile of the College at all levels. A Single Equality Action Plan will be produced which will set targets for improvements in the staff profiles. This will include targeted actions.
- **The Equality and Diversity Committees** are responsible for the monitoring and review of the Disability Equality Policy and for evaluating its effectiveness. This Committee will include actions related to Disability Equality in the Single Equality Action Plan. The Plan will incorporate actions and targets for continuous improvement in achieving equality. The Committee is also responsible for the systematic monitoring of the performance indicators included in the Plan.
- **Managers** are responsible for putting the Policy and its strategies and processes into practice, making sure that all staff know their responsibilities, and receive support and training in carrying these out, following the relevant processes and taking action against staff or students who discriminate for reasons of disability.
- **All staff** are responsible for ensuring that they are able to recognise bias and stereotyping, and to challenge or report it if they witness it, promoting disability equality, ensuring that they do not discriminate against anyone because of disability and taking up training and

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development opportunities to keep up to date with legislation on disability discrimination.

- **Students** are responsible for ensuring that they do not discriminate against anyone because of disability, ensuring that they are able to recognise disability discrimination and stereotyping, and to challenge or report it if they witness it.

3. Reference

This Policy has been written with regard to the:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and amendments
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employment Directive 1975 amended 2002
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Employment Equality Regulations

What do we understand by 'disability'?

'Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities' (DDA 1995 Part 1. Para 1.1.) This definition was amended and broadened in December 2005 under the Disability Amendment Act:

- People with cancer or surviving cancer are now included as are people with HIV and Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis
- For a mental impairment, the need for it to be clinically well recognised has been removed.

Disability Legislation recommends that those with learning difficulties and those with long term medical conditions are to be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality.

The above is the '*medical model of disability*', e.g. diagnosis of what is wrong with the individual. It is more appropriate in the interests of inclusion to use the '*social model of disability*' to provide appropriate adjustments and resources to facilitate inclusion.

The College recognises that it is the world and society that create barriers that limit or prevent disabled people from enjoying the same opportunities as people that are not disabled. The College therefore uses the '*social model of disability*' to seek equality for and tackle discrimination against people with disabilities.

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The College will:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- To take steps to take account of disabled persons disabilities even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

4. Documentation

The full Policy will be published through:

- the Corporate Manual on the College intranet
- staff induction materials
- on request through Student Services/HR
- summarised versions will be made available to students, e.g. through the Learner Handbook.

5. Monitoring and Review

The College will:

- review the Disability Policy in conjunction with the Single Equality Scheme in 2011
- review the external and internal EDIMS through the Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment
- consult staff and students and external agencies as part of the Policy review
- provide mandatory staff training on equal opportunities issues, including race equality; offer the same training to Governors or organise separate training.

Responsibility for review: Jill Taylor
Strategic Director (Vice
Principal) – Quality and
Learner Services)

Review Date: **October 2011**

Endorsed by: Peter Crompton
Principal and Chief Executive

..... David Millington
Chair of the Corporation