

EQUALITY SCHEME AND OBJECTIVES 2020-2023

INTRODUCTION

The East Surrey College Corporation (the College) is committed to ensuring the fair treatment of all its staff, volunteers, agency workers, contractors, students of all levels, all age groups and cohorts and the fair treatment of prospective and past students in matters relating to their studies at the College.

In order to achieve this commitment, the College works hard to provide equality of opportunity and to eliminate unlawful discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. We work to support those in receipt of Free School Meals and/or bursary, Looked After Children, Young Carers, Care Leavers. This commitment is not just about complying with legal requirements, it is about exceeding them. Our commitment is in every aspect of what we do as an employer and a provider of education.

LEGISLATION

The East Surrey College Corporation recognises its legal duties under the general equality duty within **the Equality Act 2010** to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don't share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it

The nine protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage or civil partnerships. However, we recognise that there are also some disadvantaged groups within the College who are not covered by the legislation, for example, students in poverty, with complex and adverse childhood experiences and those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds who need similar protection and support in order to access the same opportunities as others.

SCOPE

The Chief Executive and the Governors are responsible for ensuring that the College complies with Equality legislation and for approving and reviewing the Scheme and monitoring its implementation. The Chief Executive is responsible for giving a consistent and high-profile lead on equality issues, promoting the Scheme inside and outside of the College.

The Equality Forum has been set up as a steering committee to ensure that the actions contained within the Equality Scheme are undertaken and completed.

The Director of Human Resources and Professional Development is responsible for the monitoring and implementation of all aspects of this Scheme relating to the employment of staff. This includes the monitoring of fair selection processes and their impact on the staff profile of the College.

Managers are responsible for putting the Scheme, its strategic objectives 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 supporting staff when and where required.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that they are able to recognise discrimination and to challenge or report it if they witness it, promoting equality, ensuring that they do not discriminate against anyone. Staff will also take up training and development opportunities to keep up to date with equality and diversity matters.

All Students have a responsibility to positively engage with Equality and Diversity themes in tutorial and in taught sessions. Students must also ensure their own behaviours reflect the College values in terms of equality, tolerance and respect. Students will report any behaviours they witness which may be discriminatory.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2020-2023

1. To recruit, support and develop a diverse workforce that meets the needs of students

We will seek to achieve this through:

- A human resources strategy that identifies equality considerations and is regularly monitored and reviewed.
- Fair, transparent and supportive recruitment procedures that recognise the barriers that can be faced by diverse groups.
- Regularly collecting, analysing and publishing workforce monitoring data and developing strategies to address barriers and gaps.
- Promoting fair and transparent criteria for staff pay structures.
- Ensuring no unintentional bias in our actions, policies and processes.
- Reducing the gender and ethnicity pay gap by ensuring talent and succession planning is transparent and fair.
- Provision of training and professional development so that staff are knowledgeable and equipped to meet the diverse needs of students and know how to implement equality of opportunity in their practice.
- A framework of core personal competencies and the Personal Performance Development Review (PPDR) so that staff understand their personal responsibility to deliver equality outcomes.
- Ensuring that there is a working environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- Engaging staff in the development and review of College policy and strategy.

2. To engage with students and stakeholders to improve equality outcomes and participation for diverse students.

We will seek to achieve this through:

- Developing our 'Student Voice' strategies and structure so that they are inclusive, support participation and are influential in improving outcomes for all cohorts of students including those with additional needs.
- Taking appropriate actions identified as a result of student feedback and monitoring the impact.
- Developing our employability and personal development and student enrichment initiatives to ensure more rounded student development, informed by a comprehensive understanding of the issues that our cohorts face.
- Our engagement with community groups, agencies and partners to take account of the needs of vulnerable or marginalised groups in our planning and policy development.
- Regularly reviewing College priorities with students and stakeholders to take account of changing needs and interests.

3. To support access to learning for different groups of students.

We will seek to achieve this through:

- Ensuring that our admissions processes enable all students to access information, advice and guidance to make informed choices and to be considered for courses and / or training on an equal and consistent basis.
- Implementing a risk assessment system that is fair and sensitive to the situations of individual students.
- Ensuring the curriculum design reflects our intent to meet the diverse profiles of students so that they are able to develop the positive behaviours required by employers and to be active participants in their communities.

- Collecting and analysing data gathered through the IAG process and via initial assessment and course induction to inform the support, teaching and learning resources made available to meet students' requirements for access to learning.

4. To raise the achievement and success levels of different groups of students. We will seek to achieve this through:

- Monitoring and strategically reviewing the achievement / success rates of students by age, level disability, ethnicity, Looked After Children, those in receipt of Free School Meals and/or bursary support, those with High Needs, and gender and other diverse groups as appropriate.
- Target setting and monitoring for attendance, retention, achievement and success against key performance indicators.
- Raising aspirations through individually negotiated learning plans and targets framed within study programmes.
- Resourcing on-programme specialist support services to meet the needs of students with a specific disability, or learning difficulty, or emotional and/or behavioural difficulty, or health issue.

5. To sustain and develop an inclusive learning and working environment that promotes equality and diversity

We will seek to achieve this through:

- Activities that promote the awareness and celebration of equality and diversity among students, staff and our community partners.
- Working to equality and diversity objectives that are mainstreamed, publicised and monitored to bring improvements for students and staff.
- Giving priority to equality and diversity considerations within our programme of continuing professional development and framework for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.
- Further embedding equality and diversity into the learning experience of apprentices and off-site students.
- A curriculum offer and service that promotes community cohesion.
- Systematically measuring the impact of proposed and existing policies and practices on equality and diversity throughout the College.
- Developing our internal, external and partnership communications to be inclusive and to promote good relations amongst staff, students and local communities.
- Ensuring that our commissioning and procurement processes take account of equality and diversity requirements.
- Benchmarking our performance both within College and with external partners and sharing and implementing good practice.

6. To protect the interests of all members of the College community irrespective of their particular characteristics.

We will seek to achieve this through:

- Robust and embedded safeguarding policies and procedures that are reviewed termly.
- Where appropriate, developing support forums for students with particular needs or protected characteristics.
- The requirement for all staff and governors to undertake training in safeguarding (including the Prevent Duty) and in equality and diversity.
- Promoting a strong culture of tolerance and respect by all staff, modelling professional behaviours
- Taking action to deal effectively with all forms of bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment so that all in the College community are treated with dignity and respect.

MONITORING AND REPORTING ON PROGRESS

Data collection is a key aspect of Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIM) analysis and also development and implementation plans for the College and departments.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Key performance indicators:

Retention, Pass Rates, Achievement, Value Added, Attendance, Progression/Destinations, Learner Experience

Data collected:

Postcode of the student	Student surveys
Disability codes	Achievement data
Further Support Assessment Questionnaire	Progression information
Risk Assessments	
Attendance / punctuality	Destination data
Assessment grades, Value Added	Complaints/Compliments
Withdrawals and transfers	

Data for all types of provision is also collected, analysed and presented to governors on a regular basis. The aim of these key performance indicators is to compare different groups and aspects to monitor experience and equality of opportunity for students. The different analyses are then used to support development for the College and its provision for students via course reviews, departmental and College Self-Assessment Reports and Quality Improvement Plans, Service Level Agreements, Curriculum and Support Quality and Performance Reviews.

STAFF INFORMATION

- Gender, disability, age and ethnicity profiles of employed staff by grade and type of work.
- Applications for employment, appointments, training and promotion.
- Post induction staff survey.
- Exit surveys.
- Monitoring of completion of equality and diversity online training.
- Monitoring of completion of additional equality and diversity training, as directed by the Executive.
- Grievances – to address any underlying issues in relation to equality and diversity and to action any training needs as a result.
- Leavers – to monitor the equality and diversity make-up of staff leaving the College in comparison to the equality and diversity profile of existing staff.

The College staff equality and diversity profile is compared to that of the student population as well as the local community and is provided to the Finance and Resources Committee on a termly basis.

KEY COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

As a learning provider:

- **Comprehensive induction programme** for students covering the importance of equality and diversity.
- **Customer feedback policy and procedures** to give students a mechanism for making suggestions, making complaints or giving compliments and positive feedback.
- **Student Representatives, Department and College Councils and a Student Representative Induction Conference** to give students opportunities to express their views and be part of the College improvement process.
- **Student Surveys** used at various points in the year and course to gather views of students for the College to use in quality improvement.
- **Parents / Carers surveys** on their views on the key aspects of their son/daughter/young person's journey from initial application to the College.

- **Student Governor** leading the student voice strategy at the College, with elected posts of President and Vice President.
- **Tutorial Programmes** designed centrally and covering a range of related topics to support and raise awareness.
- **Themed events and activities** covering key topics each year including Equality and Diversity, Rights and Responsibilities, Keeping Healthy, Employability Skills, Study Skills, Entrepreneurship and involvement in national awareness days such as Internet Safety, Anti-bullying and Mental Health Awareness.
- **Additional Learning Support** is a key aspect of learning and achievement – the College offers individual assessments, support and strategies to enable students to become more independent in their learning.
- **Client Services team** with specialist knowledge and expertise on financial support, support for those with learning difficulties and disabilities and help to apply for university.
- A confidential **Counselling service** and support available to all students.
- Specialist staff to support those with more complex needs such as visual impairment, dyslexia.
- **Learning Walks and Deep Dives** which explore the implementation and impact of equality themes in the curriculum

As an employer:

- **Two Ticks** disability symbol awarded which guarantees a job interview to applicants with a disability that meet the minimum essential criteria.
- **Online training** is mandatory for all staff in equality and diversity, safeguarding including Prevent.
- **Comprehensive induction** provided to all new staff, covering expectations in relation to equality and diversity and the procedures and processes that support these expectations.
- Termly **Equality Forum** chaired by the Chief Executive and comprising staff from across the organisation.
- Termly **monitoring** of equality and diversity data through Support and Performance Reviews to monitor progress and achievements.
- Termly **reporting** on equality and diversity data to Governors' Learning and Quality and Finance and Resources committees.
- A varied **teaching and learning CPD programme** to support teaching staff in raising awareness and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in their teaching, learning and assessment.
- Recognition and consultation with two **trade unions** – UCU and Unison.
- Encouragement of feedback from staff on our policies and procedures and how they see the College as an employer.
- Regular **all staff meetings** held and slides uploaded onto College intranet to ensure accessibility.
- Regular **departmental and one-to-one meetings** to ensure employees have an opportunity to raise concerns.
- Comprehensive **HR Support and advice service** provided to employees and managers

FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

The College aims to provide service users and staff with a service that exceeds your needs. However we accept that sometimes we don't quite get things right, and when this happens we would like to hear about it so that we can address the issue and ensure that it doesn't happen again. There are a number of informal channels, such as speaking to a member of staff at the time, which we expect would usually lead to a resolution of the problem. However, if a customer feels it is necessary to pursue a complaint formally, they can be assured that we will treat it seriously and impartially.

Feedback can be provided to the College through a variety of methods:

Online as per the College Feedback process.

Email to clientservices@esc.ac.uk

Telephone 01737 788444

By post to Admissions and Enrolment Manager, East Surrey College, Gatton Point, London Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 2JX