

# TELFORD COLLEGE

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1.1. Telford College is committed to creating and maintaining a learning and working environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and where equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in all aspects of College life.
- 1.1.2. This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy sets out the College's commitment to meeting its legal duties, promoting fairness and equality of opportunity, and maintaining an inclusive culture in which discrimination, harassment and victimisation are not tolerated. It also reflects the College's responsibility to take proactive steps to prevent unacceptable behaviour, including sexual harassment, and to ensure a safe, respectful and supportive environment for all.
- 1.1.3. The policy provides a framework for how equality, diversity and inclusion are promoted and upheld across the College's activities, including employment, education, training, curriculum delivery, partnerships and engagement with the wider community.
- 1.1.4. This policy applies to all staff, students, governors, contractors, visitors, partner organisations and other individuals who engage with the College and underpins the standards of behaviour and conduct expected of everyone who works, learns or interacts with Telford College.

## **2. Purpose and Policy Statement**

- 2.1.1. The purpose of this policy is to set out Telford College's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and to provide a clear framework for promoting fairness, dignity and respect across all aspects of College life.
- 2.1.2. The College is committed to creating an inclusive environment in which all individuals are valued, treated fairly and supported to achieve their potential. We will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or any other form of unacceptable behaviour, and we are committed to taking proactive and proportionate steps to prevent such behaviour from occurring.
- 2.1.3. This policy reflects the College's responsibilities as an employer, education provider and public body, including its duties under equality and safeguarding legislation. It establishes clear expectations for behaviour, decision-making and leadership, and underpins the College's approach to preventing discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment.
- 2.1.4. Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to the College's mission, values and strategic priorities, and this policy applies to all areas of College activity, including employment practices, teaching and learning, curriculum design, partnerships and engagement with the wider community.

## **3. Scope**

- 3.1.1. This policy applies to all individuals who work, learn or engage with Telford College, including but not limited to:
- 3.1.2. Employees of the College, including permanent, fixed-term, temporary, casual and agency staff
- 3.1.3. Students, including young people, adult learners, apprentices and higher education students

- 3.1.4. Governors and volunteers
- 3.1.5. Contractors, consultants and visitors
- 3.1.6. Partner organisations, employers and other third parties engaged in College activities
- 3.1.7. The policy applies to conduct that takes place:
  - 3.1.8. On College premises
  - 3.1.9. During College-related activities, events or trips
  - 3.1.10. In work-based learning and apprenticeship settings
  - 3.1.11. When representing the College externally
  - 3.1.12. In online, digital or virtual environments connected to College activity
  - 3.1.13. In other circumstances, including informal or social interactions, where the conduct has a clear connection to College relationships, activities or roles and may impact on the learning or working environment
- 3.1.14. The standards and expectations set out in this policy apply regardless of location and are intended to ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, and that discrimination, harassment and victimisation (including sexual harassment) are not tolerated in any context associated with the College.

## 4. EDI Framework and Strategic Pillars

4.1.1. To support the effective implementation of this policy, the College has adopted a clear Equality, Diversity and Inclusion framework based on three strategic pillars. These pillars guide decision-making, leadership, policy development and day-to-day practice across all areas of College activity.

### 4.1.2. Pillar 1: Capability and Training

The College recognises that effective equality, diversity and inclusion practice depends on awareness, understanding and competence.

#### 4.1.2.1. The College is committed to:

- 4.1.2.1.1. Providing appropriate EDI training and development for staff, governors and students, proportionate to role and responsibility
- 4.1.2.1.2. Ensuring leaders and managers are equipped to promote inclusive practice, prevent discrimination and respond appropriately to concerns
- 4.1.2.1.3. Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion within induction, professional development and learner programmes
- 4.1.2.1.4. Reviewing training provision regularly to ensure relevance, effectiveness and impact

### 4.1.3. Pillar 2: Culture, Behaviour and Belonging

The College is committed to creating and maintaining a respectful, inclusive and safe environment in which all individuals feel valued and able to participate fully.

#### 4.1.3.1. The College is committed to:

- 4.1.3.1.1. Promoting a culture of dignity, respect and inclusion across all College activities

- 4.1.3.1.2. Setting and upholding clear expectations for behaviour, including zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, victimisation and sexual harassment
- 4.1.3.1.3. Encouraging positive behaviours, allyship and shared responsibility for EDI
- 4.1.3.1.4. Ensuring staff and students feel confident to raise concerns without fear of disadvantage or reprisal

#### 4.1.4. Pillar 3: Inclusive Systems, Practices and Accountability

The College recognises that equality, diversity and inclusion must be embedded within systems, processes and decision-making to be effective and sustainable.

##### 4.1.4.1. **The College is committed to:**

- 4.1.4.1.1. Embedding equality considerations into policy development, planning and organisational change
- 4.1.4.1.2. Using equality analysis, data and impact assessment to inform decisions and monitor outcomes
- 4.1.4.1.3. Ensuring fair, transparent and inclusive recruitment, selection, progression and learner support practices
- 4.1.4.1.4. Maintaining appropriate governance, oversight and review arrangements to monitor progress and drive improvement

## 5. Legal Framework and Duties

- 5.1.1. Telford College is committed to meeting its legal obligations in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and recognises its responsibilities as an employer, education provider and public body.
- 5.1.2. This policy is informed by, and supports compliance with, relevant equality and safeguarding legislation, including but not limited to:
- 5.1.3. The Equality Act 2010
- 5.1.4. The Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010
- 5.1.5. The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023
- 5.1.6. Relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance
- 5.1.7. Under the Equality Act 2010, the College must have due regard to the need to:
- 5.1.8. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- 5.1.9. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- 5.1.10. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- 5.1.11. In addition, as an employer, the College has a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of staff and others engaged in College activities. This includes taking proactive measures to identify and reduce risk, promoting a respectful culture, and responding appropriately where concerns are raised.

- 5.1.12. The College also recognises its responsibility to ensure that equality considerations are embedded into decision-making, policy development and service delivery, and that staff, students and others are not subjected to disadvantage or harm as a result of unlawful discrimination or harassment.

## 6. Key Definitions

- 6.1.1. Telford College recognises that all individuals are unique. People may hold multiple identities and characteristics which interact and shape their experience in different ways. We acknowledge that individuals do not fit neatly into single categories and that disadvantage or discrimination can arise from the combined impact of characteristics, circumstances and lived experiences.

Our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion therefore considers the whole person and the ways in which overlapping identities may affect opportunity, access and experience within the college community.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- 6.1.2. **Equality**  
Ensuring that individuals are treated fairly and are not disadvantaged or discriminated against because of a protected characteristic.
- 6.1.3. **Diversity**  
Recognising, valuing and respecting individual differences, including those relating to protected characteristics, backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.
- 6.1.4. **Inclusion**  
Creating an environment in which individuals feel respected, supported and able to participate fully in College life.
- 6.1.5. **Protected Characteristics**  
The characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010, namely: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.
- 6.1.6. **Discrimination**  
Unlawful treatment of an individual because of a protected characteristic, including direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- 6.1.7. **Harassment**  
Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- 6.1.8. **Sexual Harassment**  
Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- 6.1.9. **Victimisation**  
Treating an individual unfavourably because they have made, or are believed to have made, a complaint or supported a complaint under equality legislation, or because they have raised concerns relating to discrimination or harassment.

## 7. Preventing Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment

- 7.1.1. Telford College is committed to preventing discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including sexual harassment, and to promoting a culture in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- 7.1.2. The College recognises that discrimination and harassment can arise from behaviours, practices, environments or power imbalances, and that preventing harm requires proactive and ongoing action. We will take reasonable and proportionate steps to reduce the risk of discrimination and harassment occurring, including sexual harassment, in line with our legal duties.
- 7.1.3. Preventative measures may include, but are not limited to:
  - 7.1.4. Setting clear expectations for behaviour and conduct
  - 7.1.5. Promoting a respectful and inclusive culture across all College activities
  - 7.1.6. Providing appropriate information, guidance and training to staff and students
  - 7.1.7. Identifying and addressing areas of potential risk, including in work-based learning, apprenticeships, partnerships, online environments and interactions with third parties
  - 7.1.8. Taking timely and appropriate action where concerns are identified
  - 7.1.9. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated in any form. The College recognises its responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of staff, students and others engaged in College activities, including behaviour by third parties such as employers, contractors, visitors or service users.
- 7.1.10. This policy operates alongside related policies and procedures, including the Dignity at Work Policy and Safeguarding arrangements, which set out in detail how concerns are raised, managed and addressed.

## 8. Roles & Responsibilities

- 8.1.1. The College recognises that promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, and preventing discrimination and harassment, is a shared responsibility. All individuals who work, learn or engage with the College are expected to uphold the principles set out in this policy.
- 8.1.2. **Governing Body**

The Governing Body is responsible for providing strategic oversight and assurance that the College meets its legal and regulatory obligations in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. This includes monitoring progress against equality objectives and holding senior leaders to account for the effective implementation of this policy.
- 8.1.3. **Executive Leadership Team**

The Executive Leadership Team is responsible for leading by example, embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into strategic decision-making, and ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to prevent discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment. The Executive Leadership Team will ensure that adequate resources, training and governance arrangements support the effective delivery of this policy.
- 8.1.4. **Senior Managers and Line Managers**

Senior managers and line managers are responsible for implementing this policy within their areas of responsibility. This includes promoting inclusive and respectful behaviours, identifying and addressing potential risks, responding appropriately to concerns, and ensuring that staff and students feel safe to raise issues without fear of victimisation.

8.1.5. **Staff**

All staff are expected to treat others with dignity and respect, to challenge inappropriate behaviour where it is safe to do so, and to comply with this policy and related procedures. Staff are responsible for contributing to an inclusive environment and for raising concerns where they experience or witness discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment.

8.1.6. **Students**

Students are expected to behave in a way that respects the rights, dignity and wellbeing of others and to contribute to a positive and inclusive learning environment. Student behaviour is supported by the Student Code of Conduct and related procedures.

8.1.7. **Contractors, Partners and Third Parties**

Contractors, partner organisations, employers, visitors and other third parties engaged in College activities are expected to comply with the standards and expectations set out in this policy. The College will take appropriate action where unacceptable behaviour occurs, including where necessary reviewing or ending relationships with external parties.

## 9. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Practice

9.1.1. The College takes a proactive and systematic approach to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of its work. This includes ensuring that equality considerations inform decision-making, planning, service delivery and the day-to-day experience of staff and students.

9.1.2. The College implements this policy through a range of measures, including:

9.1.3. **Policy framework**

Maintaining a coherent suite of policies and procedures that support equality, dignity and respect, including the Dignity at Work Policy, Safeguarding arrangements, Codes of Conduct and related processes.

9.1.4. **Governance and oversight**

An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group provides oversight of EDI activity and progress, and reports to senior leadership. Equality objectives and progress are reviewed regularly and reported through appropriate governance structures.

9.1.5. **Equality analysis and impact assessment**

Equality considerations are embedded into policy development, service planning and organisational change through the use of equality analysis and impact assessment, ensuring due regard is given to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

9.1.6. **Curriculum, teaching and learning**

The College seeks to ensure that teaching, learning and assessment practices are inclusive, accessible and responsive to the needs of diverse learners, and that achievement gaps are identified and addressed.

9.1.7. **Employment practices**

Recruitment, selection, development and workforce practices are monitored to promote fairness, reduce disadvantage and support equality of opportunity for staff.

#### **9.1.8. Engagement and consultation**

The College engages with staff and students through established forums, surveys and representative structures to inform EDI priorities and support continuous improvement.

#### **9.1.9. Training and awareness**

Staff and students are provided with appropriate information and training to support understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion, including expectations around behaviour and the prevention of discrimination and harassment.

### **10. Reporting Concerns and Seeking Support**

- 10.1.1. The College is committed to ensuring that concerns relating to equality, discrimination, harassment or victimisation, including sexual harassment, can be raised safely and are taken seriously.
- 10.1.2. Individuals are encouraged to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity, whether informally or formally, so that issues can be addressed promptly and appropriately. Concerns may be raised by staff, students or others who experience or witness behaviour that does not align with this policy.
- 10.1.3. The College will handle concerns sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. No individual will be treated unfavourably for raising a concern in good faith or for supporting another person to do so.
- 10.1.4. Concerns may be raised through a range of appropriate routes, including line managers, Student Services, Human Resources, safeguarding leads or other designated contacts, depending on the nature of the concern and the individual involved.
- 10.1.5. Further information on how concerns are raised, managed and resolved is set out in relevant College policies and procedures, including the Dignity at Work Policy, Safeguarding arrangements, Student Behaviour processes and Whistleblowing Policy.
- 10.1.6. Support and reasonable adjustments may also be provided in line with the College's Wellbeing Policy and Family Friendly Policy, ensuring appropriate support for individuals experiencing health-related matters, disability, pregnancy or maternity, or other circumstances requiring reasonable adjustments.

### **11. Training, Awareness and Culture**

- 11.1.1. The College recognises that effective equality, diversity and inclusion practice, and the prevention of discrimination and harassment, depend on awareness, understanding and a positive organisational culture.
- 11.1.2. The College will provide appropriate information, guidance and training to support staff and students to understand their responsibilities under this policy, including expectations around behaviour, respect and dignity. This includes training to support the prevention of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment.
- 11.1.3. Training will be proportionate and relevant to role and responsibility. Managers and those with leadership or supervisory responsibilities will receive additional support and guidance to enable them to recognise potential risks, respond appropriately to concerns and promote inclusive and respectful environments.

- 11.1.4. Equality, diversity and inclusion will be reflected within induction processes, ongoing professional development, student induction and wider awareness-raising activity. The College will use a range of approaches to promote understanding and encourage respectful behaviours, contributing to a culture in which concerns are challenged early and unacceptable behaviour is not normalised.

## **12. Monitoring, Review and Measuring Impact**

- 12.1.1. The College is committed to monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and to using evidence to drive continuous improvement in equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 12.1.2. Progress against the College's equality objectives and related action plans will be monitored through appropriate governance and management arrangements. This may include the review of relevant staff and student data, feedback from surveys and consultation, and consideration of themes or trends arising from reported concerns.
- 12.1.3. The effectiveness of equality, diversity and inclusion activity, including training and awareness-raising, will be reviewed to assess impact and inform future priorities. Where issues are identified, the College will take appropriate action to address them.
- 12.1.4. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up to date, effective and compliant with legal and regulatory requirements. Reviews will take account of changes in legislation, guidance, organisational priorities and learning from practice.

## **13. Related Policies**

- 13.1.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related College policies and procedures:
  - 13.1.1.1. Dignity at Work Policy
  - 13.1.1.2. Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
  - 13.1.1.3. Employee Wellbeing Policy
  - 13.1.1.4. Family Friendly Policy
  - 13.1.1.5. Recruitment and Selection Policy
  - 13.1.1.6. Code of Conduct
  - 13.1.1.7. Disciplinary Policy
  - 13.1.1.8. Grievance Policy
  - 13.1.1.9. Whistleblowing Policy
- 13.1.2. These policies provide further detail on behavioural expectations, reporting routes and procedures for managing concerns relating to equality, dignity, respect and safety.

### Policy Review History

Version	Review Date	Reviewer	Reason for Review
5	January 2026	Philippa Hadley	Review date is January 2026. Legislative changes 2024 (sexual harassment).