

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Role responsible:	Director of HR
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Approved by:	Corporation
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<i>This policy reflects legislation at the time it was last reviewed. If there is a conflict between legislation and the policy, legislation will take precedence over anything printed in the policy.</i>	
Changes made:	<p>No proposed changes were presented to the Resources & Personnel Committee. Following feedback from the Committee, the following revisions were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove Appendix 2 regarding overseas students as no longer relevant • Updated job titles where needed • Reference to Corporation added as well as staff and students
Version:	2.1

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The purpose of this policy is to say what we mean by equality and diversity, to promote best practice, and to guide our compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and other legislation.

This policy applies to all members of staff, students, and Corporation members at the college. It sets out the College's commitment to ensuring equality and embracing diversity and inclusion for staff and students. It allows the College to promote equality of access to learning opportunities for all by raising awareness of equality issues and ensuring they are considered when relevant decisions are made. No student or member of staff will suffer any harassment or victimisation as a result of implementing this policy.

1 Introduction

Wyke Sixth Form College is fully committed to promoting equality of opportunity and achieving the elimination of negative discrimination within the College. Equality, diversity, and inclusion are important because a high-quality education for students and rewarding employment experience for staff only arises from every individual being given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The College is also committed to providing a learning environment that respects and responds to the diversity of the people within that environment.

This policy explains and responds to the statutory duties to promote equality across all the nine protected characteristics listed below:

- gender
- gender reassignment/transgenderism
- sexual orientation
- race
- religion or belief (or none)
- disability
- age
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity

It also covers poverty and deprivation and other important characteristics that affect people at College. The policy prioritises the welfare and success of young people leaving care, those who are care leavers, and those from very poor homes or whose life circumstances are particularly difficult.

2 Our College values

Equality, diversity, and inclusion underpin our mission to '*inspire and support all students to achieve exceptional success*'. Our values promote equality and British values:

✓ *Pride*

We will do the right thing, act with integrity and respect the rights, differences and dignity of others

✓ *Thriving in a caring community*

We will show care for everyone in the Wyke community

✓ *Academic excellence*

We will support everyone achieving their potential, regardless of their background or circumstance

✓ *Ready for the world*

We take responsibility for our individual behaviour

2.1 Policy

➤ *We promote equality and inclusion – because it's the right thing to do*

Research shows that more equal societies are better for everyone (www.theequalitytrust.org.uk). Our College is a reflection of wider society so if we promote equality, that will be better for all of us.

Equality and inclusion is about being valued for who and what we are. This helps us to achieve our best without unfair obstacles or stereotyping or being restricted by anyone's expectations of our ability.

This means:

Access - Being able to get to, into and around the College, and complete the learning journey or our job role, with equal ease and dignity

Treatment - Having a sense of belonging – where we fit in and can be ourselves

Service - Feeling the place, the programmes and the policies have been designed with us all in mind

➤ *We value diversity – because it makes the place more creative for learning and working*

We celebrate the fact that our students and staff, our Corporation members, our partners and supporters, are from different social and ethnic backgrounds; women, men, non-binary and trans gender; a range of different ethnic backgrounds; of all ages, cultures and faiths; all sexualities; disabled and non-disabled; from nearby and further afield. We believe:

- Diverse teams make better decisions and enrich our learning and working
- Seeing people like ourselves around increases our sense of belonging
- Listening to different points-of-view improves how we do things
- Valuing our differences, as well as the things we have in common, strengthens inclusion

Equality is not just about who and what we are. It is also about inequality - the gap between those who have more than enough in life to get by, and those who haven't got enough. This isn't just about money. It's also about life chances and circumstances such as the well-being and success of young people leaving care, those from very poor homes and those whose life circumstances are particularly difficult. So:

- *We reduce inequality - to make sure those with least resources have an equal chance of success*

Our work on equality and diversity is strengthened by our promotion of British values of democracy and the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

We recognise that everyone is learning about these topics and will aim to re-educate people who get things wrong where appropriate.

3 Students and studying

Because we champion equality, inclusion and diversity, all our courses give:

- As unbiased an insight as possible into the subject
- Learning that starts close to home – with your own lives and experiences
- A global rather than a narrow perspective

And readiness for a world of work where:

- Diverse teams are normal and more creative
- Teamwork is highly prized
- Tolerance and respect are essential
- Flexible, creative, and open minds have the edge
- You understand your rights as well as your responsibilities

Equality, diversity, and inclusion mean respect for others, and solidarity with those who may need a bit more looking after. Harassment and bullying are not tolerated - either face-to-face, behind people's backs or on social media - even if you say *'It was only a joke'*.

When students enrol, we talk through the whole learning journey, giving opportunity to discuss whether everyone can join in every aspect of the course with ease and dignity.

3.1 We will offer a safe, enjoyable, and challenging learning experience.

Ours is a College where, for example:

- People of all genders study together across all study programmes
- Students of all sexualities look out for each other
- Bullying is not tolerated
- Students with disabilities feel safe and included all the time
- Lessons are challenging and enjoyable, inclusive and mature

What does excellence look like?

- Students are respected, included and well-looked after by their teachers and by each other
- Students know about equality and the environment as it relates to their course
- Students can work successfully in diverse teams

4 Staff and working

Because we promote equality, diversity and inclusion, the College:

- Treats everyone with respect and dignity
- Values everyone's work and takes their concerns seriously
- Promotes a healthy and considerate balance between work and lives outside work

Diverse teams can produce more creative thinking, sharper problem-solving and better results all round. We support action to increase the diversity of the staff.

We know that racism, sexism and any form of discrimination can intrude into the workplace in both blatant and subtle ways. To counter this possibility, we promote a culture where, for example:

- Banter about who or what we are is not acceptable
- Minority ethnic staff are not assumed to be cultural experts
- Sexualised talk about women and men does not happen (unless being examined within context as part of the curriculum)
- Any derogatory language regarding gender or sexual identity will not be tolerated e.g. using 'gay' as an insult or saying someone 'runs like a girl'
- Trans/non-binary staff and students are supported and treated with respect
- No one is put down in public – even when they may be wrong

Harassment & bullying are not tolerated in any form, even under the guise of 'getting the job done'.

Reporting aggressive managers and colleagues is encouraged and valued. So, ours is a College where, for example:

- Realistic deadlines are negotiated with consideration for others
- Flexible and innovative ways of working are encouraged – for all staff
- Line-management is honest, open and supportive – and staff are accountable
- Opportunities for promotion and development are transparent and fair

Equality, diversity and inclusion are everyone's responsibility and managers take the lead

What does excellence look like?

- ✓ Staff contribute to an open and honest, supportive and inclusive culture
- ✓ Policies and ways-of-working which promote equality and value diversity
- ✓ Staff have the support and the skill to integrate equality into their work

5 Leadership and managing

Good leadership is supportive and responsive to individual needs and therefore essential in ensuring excellent practice in this area. Places where the gap between the rich and poor is smallest are better for all of us (www.theequalitytrust.org). Inequality is about the social and economic gap between the haves and have-nots. Promoting equality is about helping close this gap and having a more equitable share for all.

5.1.1 *Closing the inequality gap*

At the College, equality is about the access, treatment and services we provide. It's about tackling inequality where we can – reducing the gap between those who have more than enough, and those who have too little to get by, and making sure everyone has sufficient to work and learn with dignity.

Ours is a College where, for example:

- Resources are used to combat inequality – for both students and staff
- Our website and social media presence express our values and promote equality and diversity
- Our remuneration policy and pay rates reflect our commitment to reducing inequality e.g. fair differentials between pay scales
- Contracts of employment model fair, respectful and equitable practice

5.1.2 *Leadership from the top*

Senior managers take the lead on equality, diversity and inclusion. They assess the impact of how well their plans and decisions promote equality, diversity and inclusion. They use Impact Assessments to guide and check all policy and project decisions.

This means managers, for example, who:

- Start and finish meetings on time
- Treat others as they themselves wish to be treated
- Meet staff 1:1 on a regular basis
- Do what they say they'll do - and tackle problems swiftly
- Are clear and consistent – because the opposite can be undermining
- Use a collaborative and consultative style of managing – to encourage creative results.

We consult with others so our decision-making is inclusive.

What does excellence look like?

- ✓ Clear and vocal leadership by managers on equality, diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Collaborative management throughout the College
- ✓ Accountable plans to promote equality, increase diversity and reduce inequality

6 Our environment

We champion inclusive design as this is how equality is applied to the built environment – our buildings and the spaces around them.

Inclusive design is about making sure places and spaces are welcoming and easy to use.

This means we involve as many different people as possible in the planning and design, maintenance and management of our places and spaces.

It's about being an organisation that values collaboration and uses diverse perspectives to improve how we do things.

We embrace the slogan from the international disability rights movement:

'Nothing about us without us'

An inclusive environment means, for example:

- Staff who think-through the whole of your learning journey before enrolling you
- Strong use of assistive technologies
- Entrances designed for people with sight and mobility impairment
- Classrooms with excellent acoustics
- Dyslexia sensitive web-site
- Inclusive toilet facilities
- Adequate space for the number of learners to study with ease
- Classrooms laid-out for people using wheelchairs
- A wide range of people are engaged in plans for refurbishment and the design of new buildings

Not every space will be accessible to everyone but we will do our utmost to make it so.

What does excellence look like?

- ✓ Wide consultation and acting on what we hear - with inclusive results
- ✓ Creative and imaginative solutions to design dilemmas
- ✓ State-of-the-art places and spaces which work for everyone

7 Our equality priorities

Each year we agree at least one overarching equality aim as part of our Public Sector Equality Duty and maintain an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan. Input into what this/these aims should be, determining the contents of the plan, and carrying out the agreed actions is welcome from all students and members of staff.

The action plan also covers poverty and deprivation and other important characteristics that affect people at College.

All these characteristics and situations are covered by this statement

8 The legal context

Because the College receives public funds, we are pleased to be bound by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. This requires us, in all we do, to have due regard to the need to:

1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment.

Examples of bad practice and remedies from other places:

- A pay audit reveals significant differentials in take-home pay between two staff teams doing different jobs but jobs of equal worth: one team – mostly men, and another team – mostly women. An action plan is drawn up to change the women's pay rate
- A transgender student is recommended not to join a local firm as an apprentice because 'she is likely to be bullied'. The College works with the firm's managers to make sure there is a safe and supportive environment

2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Examples of good practice and remedies from other places:

- Focus groups of disabled staff, students and others advise us on how to make the design of the new College building inclusive and accessible
- Additional learning support time helps close the gender success rate gap on particular courses.

3) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Examples of good practice:

- Unbiased information is included in some courses about the history and lives of Traveller communities and the ways in which they are excluded and stigmatised – follow a series of negative reports on local TV
- Activities take place involving both staff and students during World Mental Health Week to counter stereotypes of mental illness

9 How we organise equality and diversity in the College

Equality, diversity and inclusion are led by the Principal and Senior Leadership Team. The H.R. Director and the Vice Principal (Pastoral) have responsibility for overseeing work in this area for staff and students respectively and the Head of Additional Learning Support also plays a leadership role in taking appropriate action. This group researches and promotes best practice and helps write the annual Equality Action Plan. Students and members of

staff are invited to join task forces to lead on particular areas of equality that they feel passionate about. The communication method of these groups is largely via Microsoft Teams and their operation is coordinated and supported by the Head of Additional Learning Support.

Anyone wishing to learn more or become involved in a taskforce should contact the Head of Additional Learning Support or the H.R. Director.

10 Dealing with Complaints

The College has a complaints procedure that should be used by students, parents or visitors to deal with any complaints received.

The College will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who make claims of discrimination or harassment. Acts of discrimination (direct, indirect or associative), harassment, victimisation or abuse will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

Staff who feel they are being discriminated against in any way should raise the matter in the first instance with the H.R. team who will then follow the appropriate College procedure and

investigate the matter further. This may be the Grievance Policy or the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

11 Related Policies

Equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in policies and procedures across the College and the impact of each policy is assessed. However, policies directly related to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are as follows:

- Disciplinary Policy (Staff)
- Grievance Policy (Staff)
- Bullying and Harassment Policy (Staff)
- Complaints Procedure (Students)
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study Policy
- SEND Policy

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Policy, procedure, practice or strategy:	Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy		
Person responsible:	Director of HR	Date:	May 2026
Briefly describe the aims, objectives & purpose of this policy, procedure, practice or strategy.	To set out the College's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.		
	Please ensure the following characteristics are considered when assessing the questions below along with any others you feel to be relevant: Gender, Sexuality, Transgenderism, Age, Race, Religion/belief, Disability, Marital/Civil partnership status, Pregnancy or maternity. Responses may be based on learner and staff data, complaints, feedback, research, student/staff surveys and/or professional judgement.		
Is there potential, or opportunity that the proposed policy, procedure, practice or strategy will affect any groups adversely (including possible discrimination) or positively?	No, the purpose of the policy is to explain how we will actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion and to encourage people to raise it if this is ever not the case.		
If any action is required as a result of this screening exercise please note them, along with any mechanisms for reviewing the impact of the policy, procedure or practice.	n/a		

Appendix 1 – Supported Admissions

In some cases, there may be concerns about a student's fitness to study at or prior to enrolment. Such concerns might be raised by the student, a parent/carer, the feeder institution, Wyke Sixth Form College staff, an external agency or the Local Authority. Where necessary, a discussion will be held with the student, at or prior to enrolment, to determine how best the student may be supported within a fitness to study framework.

A range of evidence may be utilised in the assessment which may include:

- Educational health care plan
- Medical, psychiatric and/or psychological evidence
- Reports from schools
- Physical, emotional and social needs
- Specialist treatments and therapies required
- Vulnerability and safeguarding
- Level of attainment
- The level of support, special equipment and specialist environment
- Input from the applicant, the family or external parties.

The process will consider whether Wyke Sixth Form College can offer a suitable curriculum and support for the young person and a decision will be made in consultation with SLT. In cases where there are significant funding implications there will be consultation with the Local Authority.

Where applicants require additional support due to disability or special educational, health or care needs, the College will assess the additional support needs and consider the best endeavours to meet these needs. The applicant, parents or carers and other partners supporting the applicant will be consulted with on what reasonable adjustments can be made to meet the applicant's specific needs.

Special Education Needs, Additional Learning Support and Disability

Wyke Sixth Form College welcomes applications from students who may require additional support and endeavours to ensure that information and guidance is in an accessible form.

Completion of relevant sections in application

All relevant and supporting documentation should be provided at interview

To comply with statutory regulations, students with specific Access Arrangements for examinations will need to re-apply for these on transfer to the college. Relevant evidence must be up to date (within the previous 12 months) and provided at interview

Appendix 2 - Recognition of Prior Achievement (RPL)

RPL is an assessment process which enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting part of a unit, unit(s) or a qualification. Evidence submitted for RPL must be:

- authentic
- valid and current
- reliable; and
- sufficient

The RPL process focuses on assessment and certification of prior learning which may count as evidence towards:

- a part of a unit or unit(s) accumulated towards a full qualification
- unit or units recognised by an Edexcel Certificate of Achievement
- a full Edexcel qualification.

Contextual unit grading is an integral part of some qualifications, for example, BTEC Firsts and Nationals. When grading RPL evidence for these particular qualifications, the guidance in the specification must be adhered to and the learner's performance must be judged against the criteria in the unit grading grid. The requirements of each grading criteria must be met in full. For instance, if the grading criteria requires the demonstration of independence, the RPL evidence for this must demonstrate independence.

Although it is possible to claim for an entire qualification through RPL, this is not the norm and if you believe this to be the case then it should be referred back to the organisation which specified the original qualification. It would be unusual for an RPL learner to be able to offer prior achievement that completely matches every aspect of the qualification's assessment requirements.

In the case of BTEC qualifications Pearson's do map or give guidance to show shared content across units or qualifications. If they have not been mapped by them they must be checked thoroughly to ensure that the learners previously certified achievement meets the current qualifications assessment criteria. Records must be kept to show as evidence and ensure that it is valid.

Appendix 3 - Consumables Charging and Guidelines to Charging

Institutions may choose to charge students aged 16 to 18 in full-time or part-time education for other elements of their study programme as set out here.

There is no requirement to charge for optional extras.

The institution funding the activity is free to determine whether any charge should be made for it and, if so, how much should be charged and to whom:

- Where clothing or equipment is necessary for the student's health or safety, a charge may be made for clothing and equipment that the student retains, but only if the student also has the option of borrowing the clothing or equipment free of charge.
- For the sale of learning materials in bookshops, or similar facilities in institutions, that enables students to secure discounts on books, stationery or similar materials.
- Fines for the late return of library books or other disciplinary fines (provided such penalties have been made known in advance); and deposits on lockers, ID cards, keys, library cards or smartcards and equipment that are fully refundable except in cases of damage or theft. Fines and deposits are not fees.
- Photocopying and printing, including computer printouts, are not fees as long as they are not course-specific, are optional and there are alternative sources for these services.
- The recreational use of leisure and other non-academic facilities where the activity taking place is not a requirement of a course syllabus or not part of a student union membership free entitlement.
- Travel, board and lodging and other additional costs, including any tuition costs, associated with field trips and similar activities that may form part of or be outside the requirement of the course syllabus or agreed study programme.
- Optional extra activities where the activity is taking place outside a required part of an agreed study programme, and charging is at the discretion of the institution that would otherwise meet the cost of provision. Examples of optional extra activities include theatre, cinema or museum visits or other day or residential visits that are not a requirement of course syllabuses.

Guidelines to Charging

Students joining courses that require the payment of a consumables charge and/or deposits for equipment are informed of the costs prior to enrolment. Departments are encouraged to explain the costs at Wyke Start.

The payment of any consumables charge is required at the commencement of the course via ParentPay. Departments can levy such charges on a termly basis if appropriate.

Students are not prohibited from joining a course on the basis of course costs. Financial support is available in cases of hardship to enable students to pursue their courses provided evidence of household income is supplied to the Registrar.

Proposals by departments to amend charges are considered at College leadership team meetings in the year prior to their application.

Appendix 4 - Qualification Cessation / Withdrawal Policy

As a rule, we Wyke Sixth Form College, will ensure that any qualification withdrawal will be managed with the interests of the students/learners foremost. We will do this by ensuring student's/learners have sufficient notice to complete their qualifications and for entries and certification to be completed, and by giving guidance on alternative qualifications where necessary. We will comply with any requirements communicated to us by the regulatory authorities regarding the withdrawal or cessation of any qualifications.

In the event of short notice given by an awarding body or midyear withdrawal the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy will be applied, and prior learning will be transferred to an appropriate qualification with an alternate awarding body.

All qualifications, units and informal awards offered by: AQA, OCR, NCFE, WJEC and Pearson are covered.

All staff and associates, qualification regulators, centre staff and learners who are registered with our organisation.

Reasons for Withdrawing or Ceasing a Qualification

There are several reasons why a qualification might be withdrawn or ceased to be offered, including:

- Lack of demand for the qualification
- Qualification no longer meets the needs of the student population
- Qualification subject matter is no longer relevant
- Units and qualifications are owned by other awarding organisations who have decided to withdraw.

The Withdrawal Process will follow a two-stage process:

Stage 1 – Decision to withdraw

All current qualifications will be reviewed by the leadership team annually or more frequently if the situation requires. They will consider entry data, attainment levels, qualification relevance and regulatory changes.

Stage 2 – Managing the Withdrawal

Upon the decision being made to withdraw a qualification, a withdrawal plan will be formulated. The plan will comply with any requirements as stated Ofqual and may include arrangements for learners to complete programmes of work at an alternative centre.

The plan will:

- Specify how the interests of learners in relation to the qualification will be protected.
- Detail how the withdrawal will be communicated to the awarding organisation,
- Regulatory authorities, centres and learners providing details of all deadlines

- Including the last date for accepting entries and the last date for certification.

The Cessation Process

If any awarding body ceases the delivery of a qualification (whether voluntary or not), the following process will take place:

1. Written process or procedure will be followed in the event of withdrawing delivery of a qualification.
2. Students and parents will be made aware of the withdrawal of delivery of the qualification, the reasons for it and the procedure which will be followed.
3. We will discuss with the awarding body whether an alternative qualification can be met with already completed coursework. If not, we will look to another school/College delivering the qualification which could be used.
4. There would be communication with learners/staff demonstrating support needed where qualification has been withdrawn/ceased/changed.

The needs of learners would continue to be shared with staff and relevant access arrangements applied.