

Equality and Diversity Policy Swansea College



Swansea College Equality & Diversity Policy

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Originator	Equality and Diversity Leader Jane John
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If you, or someone you know, would like this document in large print, audio, electronically or in Welsh, please contact the Equality and Diversity Leader, Jane John.

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1. Context

- 1.1 As a further education provider and an employer we are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination in all our activities. We believe this is integral to our mission to “provide high quality, relevant provision for all our learners” and to the long term success of the organisation - and of everyone within it.
- 1.2 As a public body, under the Equality Act of 2006 and other equality legislation* we have duties to promote equality on the basis of:
- **race**
 - **disability**
 - **gender and transgender**
 - **sexual orientation**
 - **religion and beliefs**
 - **age**

Our **general duties** are to:

- promote equality of opportunity;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment;
- promote positive relations between people of different racial groups;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life;
- take steps to take account of people’s disabilities, even where that involves treating people who are disabled more favourably than other people.

We also have **specific duties to develop and publish a Scheme and action plan which shows how we intend to meet these duties** and how we:

- monitor representation and progress of different groups (by ethnicity, gender, disability and age);
- assess the impact of policies and procedures on different groups;
- review and report on our progress.

* See Appendices section 6.1 for details of relevant equality legislation.

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- 1.3 **Our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan provides details of actions we intend to take to meet our legislative duties and embed equality in our activities. Our Annual Equality and Diversity Reports provide details of progress with this. These documents are available on our website www.swancoll.ac.uk under About Us/Policies and Procedures.**

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all students, staff, applicants, service users and organisations/groups working in partnership with or for the College. It **applies to all our functions, services, policies, procedures, employment practices and activities.**

3. Statement of Purpose

- 3.1 This policy outlines our commitment to **treating students, staff, partners and other service users, equally, fairly and with respect in all aspects of College life.**

4. Policy Commitments

- 4.1 We value the diversity of our students, staff and the wider community we provide a service for, and are committed to the following:
- **promoting awareness of this policy** to existing and prospective staff, students, partners and other service users to **ensure that everyone is aware of our commitment to promoting equality in our activities and their responsibilities** in relation to this.
 - **ensuring all prospective and existing students and staff have equal access and opportunities** to achieve to their full potential;

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- **making it possible for everyone to fully contribute to and benefit from all aspects of College life;**
- **actively promoting equality of opportunity and diversity** in all aspects of College life, including provision of education, services and facilities, employment practices and partnership activity;
- **exploring differences openly and positively**, with mutual understanding and respect;
- **eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation** of students, staff and other service users;
- **tackling discriminatory behaviour, harassment and victimisation** by staff, students, partners or other service users and applying disciplinary procedures or taking other appropriate measures when dealing with serious breaches of this policy;
- **continually monitoring and reviewing existing policies, practices and procedures to ensure they are non-discriminatory** and to measure our progress.

4.2 Responsibilities for Implementing this Policy

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that Swansea College promotes equality of opportunity and eliminates discrimination. The HR Committee approves our equality schemes, policies and reports. The Audit Committee monitors compliance with meeting our legislative duties and approves our Annual Equality and Diversity Progress Reports.

The Principal and Senior Management Team are responsible for ensuring that equality of opportunity and diversity are continuously promoted, comprehensively implemented and monitored in all College activity and informed by consultation with the wider community.

The Equality and Diversity Group is responsible for monitoring progress with meeting our legislative duties and embedding equality and diversity in our activities and for promoting

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awareness of equality issues and disseminating good practice. Membership includes representatives from all areas, including the Principal, and is chaired by the Equality and Diversity Leader. The Director of Human Resources has senior responsibility for equality and diversity matters relating to staff.

The Director of Learner Services and Marketing has senior responsibility for equality and diversity matters relating to students.

The Senior HR Officers are responsible for providing advice and guidance for managers and staff on staff equality and diversity matters.

The Equality and Diversity Leader is responsible for providing leadership, specialist knowledge and guidance for managers, staff and students on student equality and diversity matters.

All managers and staff are responsible for promoting equality and diversity, and for embedding this into their service delivery, working practices and procedures.

All students, staff, partners and other service users are responsible for ensuring that their own behaviour is consistent with promoting equality and valuing diversity and are expected to report discriminatory practices or behaviour, irrespective of whether a complaint is made.

4.3 Guidance, Support and Training

The Equality and Diversity Leader will support the embedding of equality and diversity across the College through the design and delivery of training and induction sessions for managers, staff and students.

4.4 Monitoring and Review

We will monitor and review progress through existing quality monitoring, feedback and review mechanisms. This will be in conjunction with reviewing progress with implementing our Single Equality Action Plan, which is embedded in our operational planning and review processes.

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We will report on progress annually in our Equality and Diversity Progress Reports, which are published on our website.

We will review the Equality and Diversity Policy every three years (in conjunction with the review of our Single Equality Scheme) and update as necessary.

4.5 Publication

The Equality and Diversity Policy will be available on the College website www.swancoll.ac.uk. It will also be available on the College intranet. Paper copies will be available from Human Resources, Learner Services and Marketing and every faculty/department on request. This policy will also be available in Welsh, alternative formats and other languages on request.

4.6 Consultation and Feedback

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students, trade union representatives and other stakeholders representing a range of community groups and interests.

Feedback on progress with implementing this policy will be gathered via existing mechanisms, including our Learner Voice Surveys and focus groups, Staff Perception Surveys, Principal's Briefings, equality related complaints and grievances and feedback from partners.

4.7 Complaints and Breaches of Policy

Complaints and breaches of this policy will be dealt with promptly and sensitively, in accordance with our complaints, grievance or disciplinary procedure.

For further information contact the Equality and Diversity Leader, Jane John.

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5. Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following College documents:

- Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Disciplinary Procedures
- Disability Statement
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Staff Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures
- Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Complaints Procedures
- Maternity Leave and Return to Work Procedures

6. Appendices

6.1 Underpinning Legislation

- Equality Act 2006
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000;
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005;
- Gender Equality Duty 2006;
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006;
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003;
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003;
- Human Rights Act 1998

6.2 Impact Assessment

An impact assessment and review of our Equality and Diversity Policy was undertaken in March 2009. This policy has been updated following the findings from the impact assessment. The key findings and recommendations are attached below.

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Full Impact Assessment Proforma

(For policies/procedures identified from screening as **high priority**)

Equality and Diversity Policy Impact Assessment 31st March 2009

Decision/Recommendations

Your decision and recommendations should be based on:

- **the aims of the policy/procedure**
- **the evidence you have collected**
- **the results of your consultations**
- **the relative merits of alternative approaches**

1. Should the policy/procedure be implemented without changes? **Y/N**

If yes, please give reasons for your decision:

2. Should the policy/procedure be changed/amended? **Y/N**

If yes, please give reasons for your decision and recommended changes:

The policy currently emphasises our commitment to ensuring equality, eliminating discrimination etc for all our students and staff (and prospective students and staff) but does not list different equality strands (gender, disability etc) and our specific legislative duties in relation to these. We need to include a statement in the policy which highlights these equality strands to make it clear that we are committed to meeting our specific duties in relation to these groups etc but also make it clear that our duties apply to everyone and we are committed to treating everyone equally and fairly. We also need to add a statement making it clear that this also applies to visitors, partners etc

We will be consulting with students, staff, community groups and other stakeholders as part of the development of our Single Equality Scheme. This will include looking at any gaps in our existing equality schemes and policies (and how these are implemented) and exploring equality issues and organisational priorities from different perspectives.

We will need to update our Equality and Diversity Policy following this consultation and cross-reference it to our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan. Our Scheme and Action Plan will outline specific objectives and actions we intend to take to promote equality and eliminate discrimination (on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion/beliefs etc) in more detail.

3. Should the policy/procedure be abandoned altogether? **Y/N**

If yes, please give reasons for your decision and recommended alternative measures/approaches: