

reigate•college

Equality & Diversity Policy

December 2019

Review: December 2022

1 Introduction

1.1 Reigate College is committed to achieving fairness and equality for all who learn and work at the College and will promote equality and social cohesion between different social groups.

1.2 The College aims to ensure that all students and employees and others as required by law, (actual or potential) are treated fairly and equally regardless of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

1.3 The above applies regardless of whether the person has the characteristic themselves or is associated with someone with a protected characteristic or is perceived to have the characteristic, whether or not they actually do.

1.4 The College aims to apply this equal treatment throughout the learning or employment experience, from initial enquiry prior to joining the College, through to leaving the College.

2 Harassment

The College believes that harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics listed in paragraph 1.2 are unacceptable in any form and will treat any instances of harassment on these grounds seriously and as gross misconduct where committed by a student or employee. Harassment committed by any other service user or third party e.g. contractor, will be dealt with as soon as possible and may result in the removal of service or contract where applicable.

3 Impact Assessments

The College will regularly screen and assess the impact of new and existing policies, procedures and practices in order to make sure it achieves its vision of equality and will publish its findings, as required.

4 Use of Data

Monitoring the implementation of this policy necessitates the collection of data on staff and students at all stages of their College experience, with regard to whether they have any protected characteristics or are associated with anyone with protected characteristics. The data will be collected and used within appropriate guidelines and purely for monitoring and reporting purposes at all times.

5 Changes to Policies, Procedures and Practices

5.1 Where people with a protected characteristic are directly or indirectly discriminated against, the College will seek to amend its policy, procedure or practice to find an alternative means of achieving its aims that does not have the discriminating effect or has a less discriminatory effect on people with the protected characteristic.

5.2 When changes cannot be made or are not available or appropriate the College will assess whether the indirect discrimination is justified i.e. whether it represents a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

5.3 Where impact assessments reveal a negative impact on those with a protected characteristic the College will also consider using positive action to rectify the situation, where this is appropriate.

6 Right to complain

Any person who feels an action or process of the College contradicts this vision for equality and fairness, may complain via either the College Complaints or Grievance Procedure.

7 Equality & Diversity Scheme

The following scheme, outlines how the College will practically implement the policy.

7.1 Specific Aims

The College aims to:

- a) To promote a culture of respect
- b) To value the differences between members of the College community and actively celebrate diversity
- c) To challenge expressions of prejudice and seek to rectify any discriminatory practices or behaviour
- d) To ensure the College meets its legal obligations in relation to the Equality and Diversity Act 2010

a) To promote a culture of respect

- Ensure that our environment signifies that everyone is welcome at Reigate College
- Ensure that staff, students, visitors and other relevant stakeholders are informed about our commitment to equality and diversity and our expectations with regard to respecting others
- Ensure that staff and students are encouraged to play an active role in instilling a culture of respect and promoting equality and diversity issues
- Seek to encourage applications from prospective students, staff and governors that will foster diversity
- Hold an annual E&D day for all L6th and Intermediate students to celebrate E&D and inform students, where possible, about the protected characteristics in both the Tutorial Programme and within the curriculum
- Raise awareness of E&D with learners on all courses to help prepare them for their entry as responsible citizens in the world of work
- Promote Fundamental British Values in both the Tutorial Programme and within the curriculum

b) To value the differences between members of the College community and actively celebrate diversity

- Ensure that our institution is inclusive, advancing equality of opportunity. We will provide an environment where staff, students and visitors will want to study, work and visit, regardless of who they are
- Monitor our provision with the aim of continuously improving equality of opportunity
- Ensure an inclusive approach to the recruitment and professional development of staff
- Ensure an inclusive approach to the recruitment and enrolment of students and their academic progress
- Strive to ensure all students have access to high quality learning opportunities, irrespective of personal identity or background
- Review the impact of policies, practices and procedures in relation to stakeholders and the protected characteristics
- Review and identify actions in relation to our E&D provision, including review of our equality objectives
- Celebrate the diverse nature of our College community, ensuring at least one main focus/event per academic year
- Ensure we have an active E&D committee
- Ensure that students, staff and visitors that might require special provision in relation to their protected characteristics, either regularly or on specific occasions, are supported in their needs, as far as is within our capabilities to do so
- Maintain a College Equality Officer on the student union
- Review College EDIMS, display these on the College website and work systematically to challenge potential differences in outcomes for different groups

c) To challenge expressions of prejudice and seek to rectify any discriminatory practices or behaviour

- Create a culture where staff and students feel comfortable to report incidents, ensuring that staff and students are clear who to approach if they feel an issue of discrimination or prejudice has occurred, be it in relation to themselves or third parties

- Actively challenge discriminatory and/or prejudicial behaviour amongst students, ensuring disciplinary procedures are applied, as appropriate (please see the Student Code of Conduct for further information)
- Actively challenge discriminatory and/or prejudicial behaviour amongst staff and visitors, ensuring disciplinary procedures are applied, as appropriate
- Seek legal advice and take legal action where appropriate, though if possible, issues will be resolved in an informal manner
- Ensure that, in a situation where complaints are made, that staff, students and other relevant stakeholders are treated with respect and kindness; be they the complainants or the accused. As part of this we will maintain confidentiality wherever possible (please see Anti-Bullying and Anti-harassment Policy for further information)
- Preview new policies/procedures to check for any potential discriminatory components

d) To ensure the College meets its legal obligations in relation to the Equality and Diversity Act 2010

- Meet all of our obligations under The Equality Act, 2010
- Ensure that the Trust understands the College's legal obligations
- The Trust, in partnership with staff, students and Governors, monitors the institution in terms of its compliance to legal duties
- Regularly review our performance with regard to legal obligations and amend the Equality and Diversity Policy whenever there are changes to the law, or, at the minimum, every three years
- Provide on-going continuous professional development in equality and diversity, to equip staff to recognise and embed diversity and to challenge any form of discrimination
- Provide reasonable adjustments for staff who are, or who become, disabled
- Ensure that we challenge expressions of prejudice and seek to rectify any discriminatory practices or behaviour
- Strive to employ a diverse workforce which reflects the local community and the learner population

8 Responsibilities

- 8.1 The Trust, via the Local Governing Body (LGB) is responsible for promoting the College's commitment to equality and ensure adequate resources are made available for implementation of the Policy.
- 8.2 The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for the overall implementation of the College equality commitments and for promoting equality. They will ensure that the aims in the Policy are integral to the College's strategic objectives and development plans.
- 8.3 The Equality and Diversity Committee will oversee the Policy and monitor implementation of it. The Committee will ensure that the LGB will receive an annual report with regards to this. The Committee will update the aims in the Policy if required.
- 8.4 Managers will make sure that equality issues are core to service delivery, teaching and learning, staff management and recruitment, selection and promotion. They are responsible for ensuring that all staff and students are made aware of the Policy and its aims.
- 8.5 The Equality Officer is responsible for organising events and activities to raise awareness of this Policy and for ensuring that all staff understand equality and diversity issues through a rolling programme of staff development.
- 8.6 SLT are responsible for ensuring that complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying among staff are investigated in line with College procedures. The Associate Principal (Pastoral & Support) is responsible for ensuring that student complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying are investigated in line with College procedures.
- 8.7 All members of the College community are responsible for supporting this Policy, its aims and its implementation. They are expected to:

- Promote a positive working and studying environment that is free from discrimination, harassment or bullying
- Treat all individuals with dignity and respect
- Challenge stereotyping and prejudice
- Report incidents of discrimination, harassment or victimisation