

# Dignity, Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy

Overall responsibility: Principal  
Implementation: Director of Human Resources  
Date issued: May 2017<sup>1</sup>

Endorsed and approved by SMT: \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) Pat Brennan-Barrett Principal



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<sup>1</sup> Initially issued in May 2016 with subsequent minor amendments made to reflect changes in practice vis-à-vis public sector duties in May 2017.

## Background to Policy

Anti-discrimination and Equality Law dates back to the 1970's with the introduction of several Acts including The Equal Pay Act (aimed to outlaw inequalities in pay between men and women), The Race Relations Act (made discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic origin and colour unlawful) and the Sex Discrimination Act. Since then further protection from discrimination in employment has been added including outlawing discrimination on grounds of disability, age, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

As a result of subsequent case law and a perceived lack of progress in Great Britain on equality generally, in order to update the law and bring together details of the existing protections into a single Act, the Equality Act 2010 was introduced. The Act offers protection from unlawful discrimination to people with 'protected characteristics'; these are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

In addition, public sector bodies are subject to both a general equality duty and specific duties. Organisations subject to the general equality duty must consider how different people will be affected by their activities, helping them to deliver policies and services which are efficient and effective; accessible to all and which meet different people's needs. In summary they must show they have due regard to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

To evidence their compliance with the general equality duty, the specific duties require public sector bodies to:

- Publish information to show their compliance at least annually; and
- Set and publish equality objective at least every four years.

## **DIGNITY, DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY POLICY**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Northampton College is committed to a working environment in which all individuals show respect and consideration for one another and are treated with dignity and respect at work. As such, it is committed to both the elimination of unlawful discrimination and the positive promotion and celebration of Equality and Diversity throughout all aspects of its work.

### **2 RESPONSIBILITY**

- 2.1 The Human Resources department owns and manages this policy on behalf of Northampton College.

### **3 SCOPE**

- 3.1 This policy applies to employees, students, governors, volunteers, visitors, suppliers and partner organisations (all of whom form part of the College community).

### **4 POLICY STATEMENT**

- 4.1 This policy outlines:
- How Northampton College complies with the Equality Act (2010) and its public sector general equality and specific duties;
  - The responsibilities of all staff for promoting a culture of dignity at work; and
  - The responsibilities of all staff to behave with professionalism and integrity with regards to dignity, diversity and equality.
- 4.2 This policy will be reviewed and revised periodically, particularly in the light of any developments in employment legislation or good employment practice, in order to ensure their continuing relevance and effectiveness.

### **5 DEFINITIONS**

- 5.1 Dignity at Work – This is about employees being treated with dignity and respect and preventing them being treated badly or unfairly at work.

Equality – Equality is about equal opportunity and about creating an inclusive society where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Diversity – The word diverse means “varied and different” so ‘diversity’ is about more than equality. It is about valuing variety and individual differences and creating a culture, environment and practices which respect and value differences for the benefit of society, organisations and individuals.

## 5.2 Types of Discrimination:

Direct Discrimination – Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have.

Direct Discrimination by Association – This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Direct Discrimination by Perception – This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular characteristic and applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination – This can occur when there is a condition, rule, policy or a practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if a company shows they acted reasonably and that it is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

Harassment – This is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Victimisation – This occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint, or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

## 6 KEY PRINCIPLES

6.1 Northampton College will eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. This will be achieved by:

- The provision of relevant training for all new starters and on a rolling three yearly basis for all staff thereafter;
- The utilisation of equality impact assessment in the development of College policy, procedure and practice;
- Providing flexible working arrangements, where business needs allow and family-friendly policies;
- Promote an inclusive ethos through positive action measures allowed by the Equality Act to rectify disadvantages or under-representation;

- Partners, contractors and employers' responsibilities for equality and diversity forms part of contracts /handbooks; and
- Provide an informal and formal mechanism for staff and students who believe that they have been unlawfully discriminated against, harassed, victimised or bullied to raise their concerns

6.2 Northampton College requires all members of the College community to treat each other with respect, courtesy, dignity and consideration at all times, in keeping with the principles and spirit of this policy and the College values.

6.3 Northampton College will publish on an annual basis a report demonstrating compliance with the Equality Duty. This report will be available to the public via the College's website.

6.4 Northampton College will set and publish Equality Objectives on a two yearly basis.

## **7 ASSOCIATED POLICIES**

Staff Code of Conduct

Dignity at Work – Harassment & Bullying Policy

Grievance Policy

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

Compliments and Complaints Policy [Students]

Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy

## **8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – Appendix A**

## **9 COMMUNICATION PLAN – Appendix B**

## Appendix A

### EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This form should be used by managers and policy authors within their area of responsibility to carry out Equality & Diversity Impact Assessments (E&DIAs) in relation to protected characteristics, specifically: Age, Sex, Disability, Gender reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy & Maternity and Marriage & Civil Partnership.

The word 'policy' is taken to include strategies, policies, procedures and guidance notes; formal and informal, internal and external.

The Impact Assessment may be carried out on any policy, service, function or plan you are engaged in, or are about to commence. All policies should be clearly stated. However, in reality, some policies are built into everyday procedures and customs, therefore not all policies are open to inspection and review. Any assessment of a policy should include these customs and practices as well as the formal written policy. 'Functions' means your duties and powers and includes internal and external functions, including service delivery.

#### 1. Name of policy

Dignity, Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy

#### 2. What is the aim(s), objective(s) and/or purpose of the policy?

To promote the College's compliance to the Equality Act (2010) and to communicate the responsibilities of all staff.

#### 3. Who is the policy lead?

Jan Hutt, Director - Human Resources

#### 4. Which of the following groups could be affected by this policy? (Tick all that apply)

Learners  Staff  Wider community

#### 5. Team

Names and position of Impact Assessment Team (min of 3 preferably from areas across the College):

Name	Position
Karen Civil	HR Co-ordinator
Mark Owen	Student Services Manager
Sally Bamford	HR Officer – Employee Relations & Pensions

Date E&DIA undertaken: 16.05.2017

E&DIA undertaken as a result of:

Renewal / Revision of Policy / Procedure

New Policy / Procedure

SAR process

Other  Please state \_\_\_\_\_

Date of last E&DIA (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Complaints?

Have complaints been received from anyone with one or more protected characteristic about the service provided? If yes then please give details.

No

## 7. The Impact

Four possible impacts should be considered as part of the assessment:

1. **Positive impact** – Where the policy might have a positive impact on a particular protected characteristic.
2. **None or little impact** – Where you think a policy does not disadvantage any of the protected characteristics.
3. **Some impact** – Where a policy might disadvantage any of the protected characteristics groups to some extent. This disadvantage may be also differential in the sense that where the negative impact on one particular group of individuals with protected characteristics is likely to be greater than on another.
4. **Substantial impact** – Where you think that the policy could have a negative impact on any or all of the protected characteristics. This disadvantage may be also differential in the sense that the negative impact on one particular protected characteristic is likely to be greater than on another.

Using the guidance provided above, complete the following table:

<b>Sex/Age</b>	Positive Impact	No or little impact	Some adverse impact	Substantial adverse impact
Women	✓			
Men	✓			
Age	✓			

<b>Disability</b>	Positive impact	No or little impact	Some adverse impact	Substantial adverse impact
Visually impaired	✓			
Hearing impaired	✓			
Physical disability	✓			
Specific Learning difficulties	✓			
Global learning difficulties	✓			
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	✓			
Any other disability - various	✓			

<b>Race</b>	Positive impact	No or little impact	Some adverse impact	Substantial adverse impact
White	✓			
Other minority groups	✓			

<b>Other Protected Characteristics</b>	Positive impact	No or little impact	Some adverse impact	Substantial adverse impact
Religion & Belief	✓			
Sexual Orientation	✓			
Gender Reassignment	✓			
Pregnancy & Maternity	✓			
Marriage & Civil Partnership	✓			

Please comment on any areas where some or substantial impact is indicated. Any resulting actions must be added to the attached action plan.

**8. Is there anything that cannot be changed?**

What cannot be changed?	Can this be justified?	If so, how?

Please list the main actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment in your area of responsibility. (Continue on separate sheets as necessary)

NB The revisions in May 2017 did not change the policy substantially but reflect the College's practices in respect to setting/reviewing equality College objectives. Reviewing and updating objectives on a two yearly basis as opposed to the act's requirement of four yearly ensures equality matters are reviewed, progressed and measured on a regular basis.

**EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPACT ACTION PLAN FOR INCLUSION IN QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Area for Improvement and expected impact (linked to Corporate Objectives)	N/A
SMART actions/activities	N/A
Staff development or Resources required	N/A
Timescale including Milestones	N/A
Success Indicators and evaluation	N/A

DISTRIBUTION: Copies of the final E&DIA should be sent to:  
Jan Hutt - Director of HR, Patrick Leavey - Deputy Principal – Teaching, Learning & Success and Gill Ilardo- Quality Improvement Team Administrator

**And** to those whom this Impact Assessment will cause to have further work to do in either changing processes or re-writing the policy(s) concerned.

All actions recorded here should be carried forward into your QIP, so that actions can be monitored and evaluated to measure the impact. There will be random sampling of action plans through the Equality & Diversity Forum

**Appendix B**
**COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

<b>TITLE OF COLLEGE POLICY:</b>	<b>DATE APPROVED BY Policy &amp; Strategy Group:</b>
Dignity, Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy	16/05/2017

<b>AUDIENCE (select appropriate with ✓)</b>					
Managers		Curriculum teams		Business Support teams	
All staff	✓	Suppliers	✓	Partners	✓
Other (please state)					

<b>CHANNEL (select appropriate with ✓)</b>					
<b>Policy &amp; Strategy Team (PST)</b>		<b>Quality Improvement Network (QIN)</b>		<b>Marketing team</b>	
e.g. Meeting Email	✓	e.g. Meeting Email		e.g. NC Update Managers' Update Intranet Website	
<b>Individual team</b>		<b>Suppliers</b>		<b>Partners</b>	
e.g. Document Library Noticeboards Team meeting Email		e.g. Letter or email Meeting		e.g. Letter or email Meeting	
<b>College Management Team (CMT)</b>		<b>JCNC</b>		<b>CORPORATION</b>	
e.g. Meeting Email		e.g. Meeting Email	✓	e.g. Meeting Email	

<b>COMMUNICATIONS PLAN ACTIVATED BY:</b>		
<b>Name:</b> Jan Hutt	<b>Job title:</b> Director of HR	<b>Date:</b> 06/06/2017