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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy

Policy introduction

All employees, consultants, officers, contractors, agency and casual workers are covered by this policy which commits us to being an equal opportunity employer. It does not form part of the contract you have with us, but it applies regardless of how long you have been with us.

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidance regarding equality, diversity and inclusion matters and to establish principles, structures and monitoring arrangements for the college. Hull College is committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive working and learning environment, raising awareness of equality and human rights, promoting diversity and combating all forms of inequality, disadvantage, prejudice, unfair discrimination, harassment and mistreatment within our college community.

The college will ensure that this commitment translates into action across the whole college and that equality and fairness become embedded into the college's everyday processes and practices.

This policy covers all Hull College sites including satellite sites.

Duties

Hull College is fully committed to its Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which requires the Hull College to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The first aim of the duty (to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation) applies to all nine protected characteristics while the other aims of the duty (advancing equality and fostering good relations) applies to eight of the protected characteristics, excluding marriage or civil partnership status.

Hull College is an inclusive organisation which actively wishes to encourage participation in education and training both internally and externally by staff/learners from all backgrounds and groups including those generally under-represented and those who may be considered to be disadvantaged.

In order to fulfil its commitment to promoting EDI across the college, as well as meet its requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Hull College will:

- Implement necessary actions and training to ensure that equality is advanced and embedded for all in line with a broad spectrum of corporate and curriculum policies, which

guide the delivery of the whole curriculum and wider corporate business.

- Engage and communicate, both internally and externally, with learners, staff, visitors and the wider community where appropriate, in relation to the above.
- Ensure an organisation wide commitment to advancing and embedding EDI and that it is understood by all.
- Ensure that the Hull College EDI Policy is linked to Hull College's mission statement, operational plan and strategic objectives.
- Ensure that the principle of equal opportunities is embedded in service delivery.
- Ensure that activities are fully accessible to people with disabilities in line with our public duty under the 2010 Equality Act.

We will ensure that the policy is informed by current legislation, the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

Responsibility and implementation

In order to achieve the college's ambition, all students, staff, partners, visitors, contractors and sub-contractors working on behalf of Hull College will share the college's commitment. Everyone plays an essential role in ensuring the success of this policy and each has their own duties and responsibilities. We all have a legal responsibility to comply, and any of us may be found personally liable for unlawful discrimination if we breach the terms of the policy.

Policy details

Hull College is committed to equality, diversity and inclusions in all of our activities for everyone who learns, works and visits here.

The EDI policy is governed by the Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of one or more of the following protected characteristics:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender;
- Gender Reassignment;
- Race (which includes colour and ethnic/national origin);
- Religion or Belief;
- Sexual Orientation;
- Pregnancy and Maternity;
- Marriage or Civil Partnership status.

Hull College is striving to create an inclusive learning and working environment and culture that supports positive relations between people and challenges prejudice, intolerance and discrimination in all its forms.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Code of Practice

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for Teaching & Learning

Hull College is committed to inclusive learning and embedding EDI in all aspects of the curriculum; in doing so we recognise that all learners are individuals with individual learning styles and support needs. It will therefore provide a diverse range of learning opportunities to facilitate access and achievement for the whole community.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for Staff Development

All Hull College staff will have equal access to training and development opportunities throughout the induction process and staff development programmes. Staff will also be made aware of the EDI Policy. In addition, staff development will support and facilitate good practice in embedding EDI objectives gained

from training courses. To facilitate opportunities for all, information and publicity concerning training opportunities will be widely available to all staff.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for Recruitment and Selection of Staff

Hull College employees will not discriminate unfairly and illegally, directly or indirectly, in making selection decisions. As such:

- All staff involved in the selection and interview process will have been trained or briefed in recruitment and selection procedures and the Equality Act 2010.
- All recruitment, promotion and other types of selection procedures – such as for redundancy exercises – are carried out on the basis of merit using non-discriminatory and, as far as possible, objective criteria.
- Nobody applying for employment with us must be asked about their health or whether they have a disability before a job offer is made, except in very limited situations. It may, for example, be justifiable to ask whether the applicant needs any disability-related measures put in place for the interview, or to check that they are capable of carrying out a key part of the job. It is acceptable to make some job offers dependant on a medical examination.
- Any applicant who is classified as having a disability and meets the essential criteria for the post will be guaranteed an interview.
- It is unlawful to ask job applicants anything that might suggest intent to discriminate on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Asking an applicant about their religion for a job entailing weekend working would not, for example, be permissible.

Recruitment of students

All applications will be recorded and monitored to ensure the college meet current legal requirements, for example Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.

Hull College student applications will not be discriminated against unfairly or illegally, directly or indirectly, in selection decisions and in enrolment. For further information please consult the Admissions Policy.

Compliance with Legal Responsibilities

The Equality Act 2010 gives the key legislative requirements relating to EDI. The Act identifies nine protected characteristics which set out above. All nine protected characteristics are covered in the employment duties of the Act. The protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership status is not included in the educational duties of the Act.

The following list gives you a general description of the types of acts that may both breach this policy and be unlawful. Sometimes actions can be intentional, and sometimes unintentional and we include examples of both types in this list:

- Direct discrimination (including discrimination based on association or perception) – occurs when you treat – or would have treated- a person less favourably than you treat another person in identical circumstances because of a protected characteristic. Rejecting a job applicant because of their beliefs would, for example, amount to direct discrimination.
- Indirect discrimination - occurs when a provision, practice or criteria applied to all staff has the effect of putting people sharing one of the protected characteristics (subject to a couple of exceptions) at a particular disadvantage.
- Harassment – occurs when someone behaves in a way that violates a person's dignity creates an offensive, hostile, degrading, humiliating, intimidating or similarly offensive environment for a person. Harassment also relates to behaviour connected to a 'protected characteristic.' We deal in detail with harassment under our separate harassment policy.
- Victimisation - occurs if you treat someone less favourably because they have been involved in a claim or complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- Discrimination arising from disability - occurs when you treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and cannot justify such treatment.

- Failure to make reasonable adjustments (for disabled people) – occurs when an organisation fails to make reasonable adjustments for a disabled person to avoid the disabled person being placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person.

There are other actions which are illegal under the equal opportunities legislation, and these are collectively labelled other acts. Examples include:

- Instructing another person – or applying pressure on them – to discriminate.
- Knowingly assisting somebody else when they carry out a discriminatory act.
- Discriminating against somebody believed to have a protected characteristic, whether or not they actually do, or because they associate with a third party who does.

There are practices which, although they appear to breach the aims of this policy, are in fact justifiable on objective and operational grounds. These are called lawful practices. If you are not sure whether some aspect of workplace behaviour you have experienced or witnessed is discriminatory or a lawful practice, please ask your manager for clarification.

Accessibility Regulations 2018

Hull College is also committed to meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

Reporting Concerns

It is essential that students, staff, visitors, partners, contractors and sub-contractors are able to raise concerns regarding the attitudes, behaviour or treatment relating to EDI.

Staff

Members of staff who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure. A copy of the grievance procedure is available through the staff policy portal or in hard copy on request from the Human Resources Department.

Students

Students who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the complaint's procedure. A copy of this procedure is available through the website or in hard copy on request from the Student Services Hub.

Visitors, Partners, Contractors and Sub-Contractors

Visitors, Partners, Contractors and Sub-Contractors are able to raise concerns through the college's complaints procedures. This process is available on the college website or through Customer Services.

Every effort will be made to ensure that any person making a complaint will be supported and not victimised. All complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be dealt with promptly and confidentially.

Hull College takes all allegations of discrimination, harassment or victimisation very seriously. If on investigation, it is established that discrimination, victimisation or harassment has occurred, disciplinary action will be taken and may result in summary dismissal or exclusion in cases of gross misconduct.

Occasionally, people make complaints knowing them not to be true. They might do this to avoid or deflect disciplinary action, for example. We view any complaint made in bad faith as an act of misconduct and this will normally lead to disciplinary action. In exceptional cases, bad faith complaints can lead to summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We may record and analyse information about equal opportunities within the workplace, and when you join us, you give us consent to gather and process this data about you. We use the information to make sure this policy is operating properly and refine it, to review the composition of the workforce, and to promote workplace equality.

Monitoring and evaluation will be co-ordinated in a number of ways across the college and will be presented and scrutinised within the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee. This includes:

- Annual EDI Report.
- EDI Action plan and Objectives.
- Student and staff surveys.
- Data analysis, including behaviour statistics and Deep Dives.
- Monitoring of formal complaints.
- Student EDI Committee.
- Review and amend the EDI policy to reflect developments in equality legislation and best practice.

Including health or disability questions in equal opportunities monitoring exercises is acceptable, but the data gathered must not be used for selecting or other employment related decisions.

Related documentation (policies, procedures and guidance)

- Safeguarding Policy
- Admissions Policy (Students)
- Praise and Complaints Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy (Staff)
- Learner Assessment and Appeals Procedures (HE)
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Disciplinary Policy (Staff)
- Grievance Policy (Staff)
- Harassment Policy (Staff)
- Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy
- Student Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Health, Safety and Welfare Policy