



Bexhill College

**EQUALITY &
DIVERSITY
STATEMENT**

POLICY NUMBER: OC18

Reviewed **JANUARY 2007**

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY STATEMENT



The College seeks to maintain and develop the commitment to equality of opportunity, to eliminate any activities which are explicitly or implicitly discriminatory. The college will try to provide a safe and supportive environment in which everyone is able to study or work to the best of their ability. We seek to engender a culture of courtesy, respect and understanding for all.

As an open-access College we value unconditionally every person in our community. We confirm an entitlement to equality of opportunity for all people irrespective of gender, age, sexuality, religion, race, socio-economic status, marital status, trade union activity, disability and special needs requirements. We seek equality of both opportunity and treatment for males and females – including all staff and students. We seek to create in College an environment which is both caring and appreciative of cultural backgrounds and we condemn all expressions of racist attitudes whether written or spoken or expressed through conduct.

We seek equality of opportunity and treatment for all students who have been accepted by the College as being able to benefit from the relevant courses.

The College acknowledges and welcomes its responsibilities under recent equality legislation:

RACE RELATIONS (AMENDMENT ACT) 2000

The College takes due note of its responsibilities to promote racial equality.

The RRAA came into force in April 2001 and amended the Race Relations Act 1976. The amended act takes equality requirements one step further under the law than other earlier Equal Opportunities legislation. This is because it places a positive duty on organisations to promote equality as well as ensuring employment practices are non-discriminatory.

Organisations must ensure that racial equality is a fundamental part of strategic planning and management processes. Steps must be taken to ensure all systems and procedures comply with the legislation and action must be taken to engender change where necessary. Organisations must collect data and analyse and assess it against publicly available benchmarks to measure performance and effectiveness and to identify how the organisation might improve.

In relation to recruitment and selection the College has reviewed procedures to ensure compliance with the RRAA and to promote practices that will assist in raising good practice in race relations. This will also be of benefit in raising the profile of other under represented groups. Further information can be found in the College's Race Equality Policy.

THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT, 1995 (EXTENDED 2005) AND THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY ACT 2000

The DDA applies to anyone who has a physical, sensory or mental impairment, which has a substantial long term and adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. It is against the law to treat a disabled person less favourably than an able bodied person because of their disability, unless this can be justified. In 2005, a new Disability Discrimination Act came into force, which extends the existing provisions in the DDA 1995. In particular, those who have HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are now covered by the DDA from the moment they are diagnosed. In order to help a disabled person compete on equal terms with an able bodied person employers will have to look at what changes they could make to the workplace or to the way the work is done as a means of negating or limiting the affect of the disability or providing for it by making any changes that are reasonable.

The College site at Penland Road has been designed to be as accessible as possible for disabled people. The College acknowledges the need to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of students and staff with a disability and the anticipatory nature of the legislation.

EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY (SEXUAL ORIENTATION) REGULATIONS 2003

The College notes the introduction of these regulations on 31st December 2003, which prevent direct or indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation (at or after the employment relationship has finished) on the basis of sexual orientation. Under these regulations sexual orientation is defined as:

- Orientation towards persons of the same sex.
- Orientation towards persons of the opposite sex.
- Orientation towards persons of the same sex and the opposite sex.

The College will not be asking current staff to declare their sexuality as it views this as a private matter. However, it will ensure that candidates for employment or existing staff who choose to declare their sexuality will not be discriminated against.

The College notes that under the Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended by the Employment Relations Act 1999) employees are entitled to unpaid leave to deal with unexpected or sudden problems concerning a close family member including a same sex partner.

EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY (RELIGION OR BELIEF) REGULATIONS, 2003

The College acknowledges its responsibility to ensure that existing staff and applicants are not directly or indirectly discriminated against, subject to harassment, victimised or discriminated against (including after the working relationship has ended) on account of their religion or religious belief or similar philosophical belief (as would be outlined by a tribunal, under this legislation). These regulations came into force on 31st December 2003.

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998

The Human Rights Act came into force in 2000 and incorporates a substantial part of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

It covers 16 basic human rights which range from freedom from torture and killing to individual rights in everyday life. The act also covers the right not to be treated differently because of your race, religion, sex, political views or any other status, unless it can be objectively justified.

The College recognises the importance of the Human Rights Act and endeavours not to breach the Human Rights of Individuals in its activities.

THE EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY (AGE) REGULATIONS (2006)

The College notes the introduction of these regulations which ensure age equality within recruitment, selection, promotion, training and development, redundancy and retirement practices.

The College Policy is outlined in the Age Equality Policy (P28). It states a clear commitment not to recruit, select, promote, develop or make individuals redundant on the basis of age. It also confirms the College's approach to retirement practice. The College has ensured this legislation is reflected throughout the organisation and is inherent in its policies and procedures.

SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT (1975, AMENDED 1986 AND EXTENDED 1999) AND EQUAL PAY ACT 1970

The College recognises its responsibilities under the Acts which require that organisations do not discriminate, either directly or indirectly between males and females in any way in their treatment.

In terms of employees, equal treatment in respect of pay, terms of contract and employment must be given to men and women doing the same work. The College also recognises its responsibilities under the 1999 extension of the DDA. This makes it unlawful to discriminate against an employee intending to, undergoing or having undergone gender reassignment (a process undertaken under medical supervision for the purpose of reassigning a person's sex by changing physiological or other sexual characteristics).

REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS ACT (1974)

The College notes that this Act aims to make working life easier for those who have been convicted of a criminal offence. An ex offender after rehabilitation, is generally not required to disclose a previous conviction unless the sentence exceeded 2.5 years of imprisonment. However, as work at the College involves working the vulnerable people, all spent and current convictions need to be disclosed on the application form. All staff are required to undergo an enhanced CRB check as part of the application process. If any convictions are disclosed, they are not necessarily a bar to employment at the College, the relevance of the Offence to the duties of the post will be considered at short listing stage.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EQUALITY & DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The College seeks to maintain and develop the commitment to equality of opportunity, to eliminate any activities which are explicitly or implicitly discriminatory. The college will try to provide a safe and supportive environment in which everyone is able to study or work

Bexhill College supports the principle of equality and diversity in both the provision of education and the employment and development of staff. It strives to ensure that all staff and students are treated with respect, courtesy and integrity whilst undertaking college activities.

In promoting equality and diversity, we aim to remove barriers that prevent full and equal access to learning due to individual or group characteristics.

It is our policy that no student or member of staff receives less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or learning difficulty/disability.

We aim to value diversity by recognising and respecting differences between people and by valuing everybody as an individual.

All potential and existing staff and students will be made aware of the equal opportunities policy as well as the complaints and grievance procedure.

It is the responsibility of all Bexhill College staff to promote the equal opportunities policy. Managers and staff should act positively to ensure equal opportunities are developed.

There will be an annual review of how the policy is being implemented which will include a statistical analysis where appropriate.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES – STUDENTS & STAFF

THESE ARE YOUR RIGHTS:

1. To be treated with courtesy and respect whatever your:

Race	Age
Gender	Sexuality
Religion	Disability
National origin	Social-economic group
Political views which uphold the principles set out in this policy	
2. To have your personal learning needs or development needs met
3. To be given guidance about learning and other opportunities
4. To be able to look at any records held about you. Students should ask their Tutor/Head of Section or Student Services. Staff should make requests to the Personnel Manager. These records will not be disclosed to any one else without your permission unless related to Child Protection issues where the College is legally required to provide information.

THESE ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. To respect the rights of all other people using the college
2. To attend all lessons, be punctual and to inform us when you are away, following published procedures.
3. To take an active part in learning
4. To challenge or report actions of others which do not promote equal opportunities to an appropriate member of staff.

Students

If you feel your rights have been denied, you should talk to either:

1. Any member of staff you have confidence in
2. Your Personal Tutor/Head of Section or Director of Teaching & Learning
3. Senior students
4. Student Services Manager

Staff

If you feel your rights have been denied, you should talk to either:

1. Any member of SLT
2. Your union representative
3. Your Head of Section/Line Manager or the Personnel Manager

Any complaints will be listened to in confidence

Anyone working or studying in the College is expected to behave in accordance with the Equality & Diversity Statement.

The following tables outline how the College aims to implement its commitment to Equality & Diversity.

SPECIAL NEEDS

AREA	AIM	WHAT THIS MEANS IN PRACTICE	MONITORING	MONITORED BY
Communication	All written, spoken or verbal communications should be non-discriminatory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All communication should promote the College as open access and welcoming of students with special needs. Information on special facilities for learners with special needs should be outlined in college publicity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff Marketing Personnel 	Principal
Position of support	To develop an appropriate/internal external network of agencies supporting special needs students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective liaison at pre-admission stage with any institution involved with provision for special needs. Interviews to be followed by further liaison to obtain any references or records. Liaison with relevant external support agencies. Early identification of any students with learning difficulty through the screening process. Provision of an internal support network with the college e.g. additional support To ensure appropriate INSET of staff. This will be important in the process of early identification of students with learning difficulties. 	Admissions / Student Support Manager	DoTL 1
Monitoring	To ensure that learner needs are being met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular review of provision for those students deemed as having special needs through subject tutors, senior tutors/principal tutors, students services and study centre. To action any recommendation from reviews. 	Skills for Life Manager	Deputy Principal

Bexhill College recognises that all individuals are different. However the entitlement to equality of opportunity for all people irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, race, age, class, marital status and special needs is acknowledged.

GENDER

AREA	AIM	WHAT THIS MEANS IN PRACTICE	MONITORING	MONITORED BY
Communications	All written, spoken and visual communications should be non-discriminatory either directly or through omission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing communication should be reviewed (e.g. displays in College, College publicity, job advertisements, bulletins and oral communication). All communications should avoid discrimination. We should involve non-stereotypical students in College marketing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel Manager All Staff Marketing 	Principal
Recruitment, selection and promotion	While recruitment and promotion will aim to achieve a gender balanced staff, applicants will primarily be assessed on their ability and willingness to carry out the job.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any interview panel for staff will aim to have at least one male and one female. Through recruitment and promotion we will aim to achieve a gender balance. On interview, we will appoint the best person for the post Candidates should not be discriminated against on grounds of gender, age, part-time status, career breaks, family commitments or late entry to employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair of interview panel 	Principal
Student/Teacher Interaction	Staff and students should seek to eliminate gender stereotyping in all areas of College life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and students should actively confront sexist remarks, attitudes and behaviour when encountered in students or colleagues. Staff and students should actively seek to promote non-stereotypical approaches in all areas including lessons, extra-curricular activities and careers. Staff should monitor teaching/learning styles in their classrooms to take account of this policy. 	HoS	DoTL

AREA	AIM	WHAT THIS MEANS IN PRACTICE	MONITORED BY	MONITORING
Curriculum/Careers	The College aims to encourage positive and non-discriminatory attitudes through the delivery of the curriculum and the information given to students about future careers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The monitoring of statistical information (e.g. admissions, tutor group balance, course take-up, retention and destination patterns). Using careers conventions, open days and College meetings to present employment prospects in a non-stereotypical way. 	Self assessment process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Pastoral 	Principal & SLT
Student Achievement	The College aims to ensure all students achieve their potential and will address under performance by gender.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To analyse results and achievement according to gender. To seek to address gender related underperformance. 	Teaching staff	HoS
Resources	All resources used within the College will present non-stereotypical views.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff should examine all teaching materials to ensure that they do not contain anything discriminatory. Where materials exist which do not comply with the above they should be used in a way which highlights the bias. 	Teaching staff	HoS
Governors	The College will seek to encourage all members of its Governing Body to share and develop its commitment to equality of opportunity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors are involved in monitoring the Colleges approach to equality and diversity. 	Personnel Committee	Corporation

RACE

AIM	WHAT THIS MEANS IN PRACTICE	MONITORING	MONITORED BY
To promote racial equality in line with the Race Equality Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students and staff should be treated with respect and should feel that their own culture is positively valued by the College. • Students and staff of all ethnic backgrounds be given equal opportunities to develop their potential. • College life where appropriate should reflect the different backgrounds of the students. • The curriculum should reflect the various cultures in contemporary society and promote an understanding of different cultures and of the causes of racism. • Racist attitudes and all racist incidents and attacks, whether physical or verbal, will be dealt with accordingly to College policy. • Distribution of racist literature and the use of College premises by racist groups will not be allowed. 	HoS through self assessment process	DoTL