



# **Single Equality Scheme 2019 - 2021**

**Updated: March 2019**

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## Single Equality Scheme (SES)

**Vision:** To be the leader in education and training for our region.

**Mission:** To enable students of all ages to maximise their potential through excellent teaching, learning, training and support.

### Core Values:

Responsive	We understand and respond to the changing needs of all of our communities
Optimistic	We face all challenges and opportunities positively and with confidence
Unified	We have a whole college approach that is inspirational, supportive, respectful and friendly
Transformational	We are ambitious, innovative and enterprising
Excellence	We strive for excellence in all that we do

## Introduction

The College's strategic vision and values incorporate access for all students to an environment that is inclusive, welcoming and safe.

The Corporation, College managers and recognised trade unions at New College Stamford are fully committed to delivering equality of opportunity for all its students and staff, to eliminate all forms of unfair and illegal discrimination, as well as all forms of harassment and victimisation. The College has agreed a range of policies and procedures encompassing all aspects of equality and diversity.

New College Stamford is committed to the advancement and promotion of inclusion and diversity for all students, employees and all other users of the College. Our ethos is to create and maintain conditions whereby students and staff are treated solely on their own merits, abilities and potential regardless of ethnic or national origin, disability, pregnancy/maternity, gender, age, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, social class and background or other distinction.

The College recognises that the workplace is a useful point from which to combat discrimination and inequality in society. The College workplace brings together people with differing characteristics and treats them fairly, helping to combat and address social stereotypes and prejudices, whilst reducing inequality gaps and increasing life chances, careers and aspirations.

The Single Equality Scheme identifies how we will advance and promote equality, eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations.

The SES will evolve and will be regularly updated and reviewed as good practice is developed and legislation changes.

The SES outlines the arrangements and processes the College has in place to meet our general and specific duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Part 6 Further Education), and replaces and harmonises previous discrimination legislation such as:

Equal Pay Act 1970 and 1975  
 Sex Discrimination Act 1975  
 Race Relations Act 1976 (amendment 2000)  
 Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (amendment 2005)  
 Equality Act 2006  
 Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003  
 Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003  
 Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2003  
 Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 (as subsequently amended) plus other ancillary pieces of legislation

The scheme makes reference to how the College will meet its equality duty and how we will handle any cases of harassment and unlawful discrimination. The scheme should be read in conjunction with:

Staff

- Staff Grievance Procedures
- Guidance for Harassment and Bullying in Employment in FE Colleges Policy

Students

- Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedure
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Supporting LGBT+ Students Policy
- Young Carer and Young Adult Carers Procedure

Age	Transgender
Race	Pregnancy & Maternity
Religion, Faith & Belief	Marriage & Civil Partnership
Sexual Orientation	Gender
Disability	Socio-economic status
Looked After Children	Ex-Offenders
Young Carers	

Under the Equality Act 2010, the **General Equality Duty (GED)** requires us 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 **Specific Duty** requires us to:

- Publish sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the GED;
- Prepare and publish equality objectives.

**Commitment and Putting the Commitment into Practice**

New College Stamford affirms that all individuals are entitled to equal rights and opportunities and have the same responsibilities regardless of their race, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, age or any other aspect of their identity.

The College will seek to identify and eliminate unfair discrimination, harassment or any form of illegal treatment based on any of the above criteria.

The College will respect and seek to fully utilise the diverse skills, talents and experiences of all its workforce and students. To this end, the College will engage with students and staff in the development of this equality scheme.

This scheme aims to be comprehensive in the following ways:

New College Stamford has developed procedures and practices that **encourage a diverse student population and staff group to fully participate** in the life of the College and where different backgrounds and experiences are utilised for the benefit of all. All policies, major procedures and plans will be subject to an **Equality Impact Assessment** to gauge the impact (positive and negative) of these initiatives and, where appropriate modifications are suggested, they will be implemented.

New College Stamford has developed **procedures and working practices to tackle discrimination and harassment**, recognising the fact that individuals may suffer or may have suffered from various forms of disadvantage. The College will work to continuously ensure the environment for students and staff is harmonious and safe. The College takes practical measures to reduce the opportunity for bullying and harassment, such as limiting access to social networking websites and swift meetings with anyone who is a perpetrator or victim of unwanted behaviour. If necessary, disciplinary procedures will be invoked which may result in a perpetrator's dismissal.

The elements of this scheme are **developed in consultation with staff, students and external stakeholders** to ensure that they continue to respond to the concerns of all the people affected.

The principles of equality and diversity are **applied consistently** across all aspects of learning and service delivery, working practices and the environment including admissions, student services, learning support, curriculum development, learning, teaching and marketing.

As an **employer**, the College will ensure that the principles of equality and diversity will be applied to recruitment, redeployment, staff development and promotion, to ensure that all individuals are encouraged to achieve their full potential. Staff development and training on all aspects of equality and diversity will continue to be arranged for all members of staff at induction together with tailored training thereafter. A variety of information is gathered and analysed in relation to our staff. This includes records of any complaints and the distribution of staff by age, gender, disability and race. This information may be shared in line with GDPR regulations.

The views of students and staff are gathered and acted upon through a variety of mechanisms (both formal and informal) such as student surveys, staff surveys, staff suggestion email, staff focus groups and through the LGBT+ interest group. The College also monitors and acts upon any complaints by students.

New College Stamford has developed a Supporting LGBT+ Students Policy. The primary purpose of the policy is to proactively support and minimise any distress and disruption that might be caused to LGBT+ students by:

- Ensuring lecturers, business support staff and governors are dealing with LGBT+ matters inclusively and sensitively
- Providing an inclusive and supportive environment for any student who identifies as LGBT+

- To ensure that all students are educated and aware of issues relating to LGBT+

LGBT+ is an umbrella initialism which stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Plus. The '+' represents several composite identities: Queer; Questioning; Intersex; Allies; Asexual.

New College Stamford will ensure that every LGBT+ student shall be treated fairly and equally across all areas of the College. By adopting a whole-college approach, we acknowledge that tolerance is not enough, and that New College Stamford aspires to be a college reputed for the excellent support it gives to LGBT+ students, a college that seeks out opportunities to celebrate diversity and a college known for being welcoming and inclusive to members of the LGBT+ community. For more information, as to how New College Stamford supports LGBT+ students, please read the Supporting LGBT+ Students Policy.

## **Communicating the actions, requirements, progress and expectations of the Single Equality Scheme**

### **Students**

The Student Council will be asked to actively review and monitor the action plan which supports the scheme. The College will also use mechanisms to ensure that the student voice is active and heard regarding the Single Equality Scheme. The College will utilise Student Intranet, Student Bulletins, Concerns and Complaints procedures, Student Council representative(s) on the inclusion on Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity Groups to promote and inform its practice in achieving its planned outcomes through the Single Equality Action Plan.

### **Staff**

The College will use a range of other communication tools to both gauge staff opinion and to disseminate information related to the Single Equality Scheme. These tools will comprise Staff Briefings and the College Staff Launchpad and other formalised staff/management meetings. Most importantly it will seek to achieve best practice in incorporating equality and diversity into all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment.

### **Stakeholders**

The College works in partnership with a number of external organisations. The lead contact for the partnership will ensure that the stakeholders(s) are aware of the College's commitment to and responsibility for the advancement and promotion of inclusion and elimination of unlawful discrimination and that they share and develop the same ethos and values in their own working practices.

## **Ensuring Compliance**

The College will ensure that:

- Governors, staff, students, partners and all stakeholders (including work placements providers) are aware of our Single Equality Scheme and the action needed for its implementation
- staff, students, partners and all stakeholders are aware of the value placed on equality of opportunity and diversity and that action will be taken in the event of any breach of these policies
- Governors and staff have access to comprehensive information, and progress reports which will assist them to plan, implement and monitor actions to carry out their responsibilities under the scheme

- the College publicity materials present appropriate and positive images that support these provisions
- schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of diversity
- care is taken to ensure that disabled students, students from under-represented groups and groups who have traditionally experienced unlawful or unfair discrimination have access to appropriate support and facilities
- applications for employment are drawn from a wide pool with positive action to encourage applications from under-represented groups
- recruitment, selection and promotion procedures are designed to enable people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups to fully participate in the process
- staff development schemes are designed to raise awareness and effectively meet the learning needs of all staff including disadvantaged and under-represented groups
- action is taken to ensure that individuals will be treated equally and fairly and that decisions on pay, training, career management and termination of employment are based solely on objective, job-related criteria

The Principal has overall responsibility for the operation of this scheme and associated policies which shall be reviewed regularly, particularly when there are any future changes in legislation. The current Action Plan is available by following this link to our website: <http://www.stamford.ac.uk/info/equality-diversity/>

## **Impact on Students and Staff**

New College Stamford, in line with the Equality Act 2010, is committed to ensuring that inclusive access to learning is available to all students and will be achieved by:

- promoting learning and its benefits to young people and adults in our communities
- taking positive steps to promote the advancement and promotion of inclusion and equality of opportunity and enable all people to participate in learning
- the College's publicity reflecting the diversity and the needs of local communities
- having fair and appropriate systems in place for the recruitment and selection of students
- having robust systems in place for assessing individual's needs and having qualified staff who are aware of the needs and act to meet/support them
- delivering personalised information, advice and guidance services that are inclusive and provide opportunities for individuals to achieve their full potential
- offering a diverse curriculum, both in range, content and delivery
- students being aware of how they should treat other people and the College's expectation on this
- actively seeking the views of all students, via a range of approaches, and acting on these views
- continuing to monitor the participation of staff and students by age, gender, ethnicity, disability and identifying any achievement gaps and acting to eliminate them
- College students and staff continuing to participate in inclusion and diversity training and activities aimed at skills development, embedding and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in learning, assessment and teaching

## **Implications for Quality Assurance and Standards**

The quality assurance and quality improvement processes are designed to improve the quality of the overall student experience and in particular the quality of learning, assessment and teaching. Integral to improving the quality of learning, assessment and teaching are:

- the ethos of the College reflecting inclusion and diversity
- the learning environment and learning resources
- staff attitudes and their commitment to inclusion and diversity
- students' attitudes to each other engaging with the College's expectations and requirements to inclusion and diversity
- the College's ambitions and approach to inclusion and diversity
- introducing systems to gather data and monitor participation regarding other protected characteristics; gender reassignment, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership and continue to have a clear policy on inclusion and equality of opportunity
- equality impact assessment of policies and procedures and implementation via the Quality Improvement and Human Resources teams

The Quality Improvement and Management Information Teams provide a range of information and data on the performance of the College. They provide reports to inform planning and development with the aim of providing an excellent learning experience for each of our students.

The Quality Improvement Team oversees all College policies relating to learning, teaching and assessment and student experience, and is accountable for reviewing their currency and impact. The intent is to support all staff to work towards the development and achievement of excellence for all individuals who wish to study and work at New College Stamford.

## **Implications for Human Resources**

The Recruitment Policy underpins the College values and pays particular emphasis to inclusion and diversity.

Part of the role of Human Resources is to ensure the College operates fairly towards its staff regardless of a person's protected characteristics. Staff are essential to the core business of the College which provides for their wellbeing, inclusion and equality of opportunity for all.

Human Resources lead on inclusion and diversity, recruitment and selection and the College Personal Development Review process.

Human Resources also provide management information to monitor inclusion, equality of opportunity and diversification and publishes a report on Equality and Diversity within the Workforce, annually.

## **Implications for Staff Development**

The Staff Development Strategy outlines the College's commitment to supporting and developing staff to achieve their full potential. Staff development aims to provide a range of training opportunities related to the Equality Act 2010 which includes:

- equality and diversity training related to the Equality Act and its implications for the delivery of learning and the impact on staff and students
- training on inclusion and diversity, recruitment and selection and the College performance management framework
- promoting equality and diversity through learning, assessment and teaching
- the development of e-learning to encompass inclusion and diversity

## **Data and Information**

The College will continue to produce and publish information related to inclusion and diversity, regarding students and staff. Equality analysis will be undertaken as part of the monitoring to ensure the removal of any negative impacts and to identify any potential issues that may have an adverse impact on inclusion and diversity.

## **Monitoring Procedure**

The Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan will be driven by the Assistant Principal-Quality. The Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity Committee meet at least every term; their role is to:

- Ensure College compliance with the Prevent Duty
- Formulate and continually update the College's Equality and Diversity policies
- Promote Equality and Diversity and embed in teaching and learning
- Manage Impact Assessments
- Ensure the College meets the requirements of legislation
- Ensure members are informed on Safeguarding and that information is provided to other College staff
- Review the College strategy for safety and protection of children and vulnerable adults to ensure dissemination to College users
- Receive reports on actions by individuals
- Ensure College users recognise Safeguarding issues and act appropriately, eg contractors, carers, etc
- Analysis of learner group data that helps narrow any achievement gaps

The Single Equality Scheme is incorporated into existing quality management arrangements and included in all formal and informal procedures including annual self-assessment reporting, student surveys, staff surveys, parent surveys, strategic plans.

The Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity Committee will report to the Student Council, the Senior Leadership Team and the Corporation.

Staff professional development is planned and reviewed by the Assistant Principal – Quality and the Head of HR and is reviewed by the Executive Team.

## **Appendix 1**

### **What do we mean by protected characteristics?**

The following definitions have been adapted from the Equality and Human Rights Commission ([www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)).

#### **Race**

Race means a person's:

colour, and/or

nationality (including citizenship), and/or

ethnic or national origin

a racial group is composed of people who have or share a colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins

A person has the protected characteristic of race if they belong to a particular racial group, such as 'British people'. Racial groups can comprise two or more racial groups such as 'British Asians'.

#### **Gender**

A person's sex refers to the fact that they are male or female. In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men or women or to either boys or girls.

#### **Disability**

A person is a disabled person (someone who has the protected characteristic of disability) if they have a physical and/or mental impairment which has what the law calls 'a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment not the cause.

#### **Age**

The Act defines age by reference to a person's age group and when it refers to people who share the protected characteristic of age, it means they are in the same age group.

#### **Sexual Orientation**

Sexual orientation means the attraction a person feels towards one sex or another (or both), which determines who they form intimate relationships with or are attracted to.

Some people are attracted to those of the same sex (lesbian women and gay men).

Some people are attracted to people of both sexes (bisexual people).

Some people are attracted to the opposite sex (heterosexual people).

Everyone is protected from being treated less favourably because of sexual orientation, whether they are bisexual, gay, lesbian or heterosexual.

Sexual orientation discrimination also covers discrimination connected with manifestations of that sexual orientation.

#### **Religion and Beliefs**

The protected characteristic of religion or belief includes any religion and any religious or philosophical belief. It also includes a lack of any such religion or belief.

A religion need not be mainstream or well known to gain protection as a religion. It must, though, be identifiable and have a clear structure and belief system.

### **Transgender**

Gender reassignment is a personal process (rather than a medical process) which involves a person expressing their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical sex they were born with.

This personal process may include undergoing medical procedures or, as is more likely for younger students, it may simply include choosing to dress in a different way as part of the personal process of change.

### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

The Act lists pregnancy and maternity as a protected characteristic in its own right (prior to the Equality Act 2010 pregnancy and maternity came under sex discrimination).

### **Marriage and Civil Partnership**

Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to start a family.

The European Court of Human Rights ruled in 2002 that this right extends to transsexual people who are now able to marry or enter civil partnerships in their acquired gender because of the Gender Recognition Act (2004).

The Civil Partnership Act 2004 means that gay men and lesbian women in the UK are now able to register civil partnerships. Couples who register a civil partnership have the same rights as heterosexual married couples in areas like tax, social security, inheritance and workplace benefits.

Changes to the 1973 Matrimonial Causes Act in the form of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, which came into force on 29 March 2014, now enables same sex couples to marry in civil ceremonies and for civil partners to convert their partnership into a marriage if they wish.

### **Socio-economic Status**

Until May 2011, the socio-economic duty was part of the Equality Act. It was intended to ensure that all public bodies took into consideration the socio-economic circumstances of their users. This is no longer part of the Act, however, it is still considered good practice to apply this when possible.

### **Looked After Children**

In the context of our Single Equality Scheme and Ofsted inspections, this term covers children in the care of a local authority and also children who are fostered or adopted.

### **Young Carers**

A young carer is someone aged 18 or under who helps look after a relative who has a condition, such as a disability, illness, mental health condition, or a drug or alcohol problem ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)). Many young people are sole carers for a person in their family as well as undertaking a full-time College course.

### **Ex-Offenders**

It is widely acknowledged that education plays a vital role in prevention of crime and re-offending. New College Stamford is keen to ensure that a criminal record is not a barrier to education.

**APPROVED BY THE CORPORATION ON 20 MARCH 2019**