



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1: Statement of policy

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Governing Body, with the Principal and senior management team, to the promotion of equality of opportunity in Stranmillis University College.

It is the College's policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being an Irish Traveller)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Trade union membership or non-membership
- Employment status.

The College is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

The College recognises that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice; it also makes sound business sense. This Equal Opportunities Policy will help all those who work for the College to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

2: Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all current employees and workers, and those who apply to work for the College. Equality and diversity issues relating to students are addressed in a range of policies and procedures, and in the College's Equality Scheme.

3: Equality commitments

The College is committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all people;
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all people are treated with respect;
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice;

- Complying with its own equal opportunities policy and associated policies;
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate; and
- Regarding all breaches of equal opportunities policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

This policy is fully supported by the Governing Body and senior management. It has been agreed with the College's recognised Trades Unions.

4: Implementation

The Governing Body has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. The practical application of this policy lies with the Principal and members of senior management, and each manager and supervisor have responsibilities for promotion of equality and ensuring that this policy is implemented.

The College expects all of its employees to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment which is its objective.

Every individual employee acting on behalf of the College has a responsibility in law and in terms of the College's Equal Opportunities policy to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment which is its objective.

In particular, employees must:

- Not unlawfully discriminate against fellow employees or applicants, or harass or intimidate other employees;
- Not unlawfully discriminate against or harass or intimidate student members of the College or applicants for places in the College;
- Co-operate with measures introduced by the College to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination;
- Not induce management, Trade Unions or fellow employees to practice unlawful discrimination; and
- Ensure that all dealings with the public are undertaken in a non-discriminatory manner.

In order to implement this policy, the College will:

- Communicate the policy to employees, job applicants and relevant others (such as contract or agency workers);
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of staff;
- Provide equality training and guidance as appropriate, including training on induction and management courses;
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in non-discriminatory selection techniques;
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communications practices (e.g., staff newsletters, intranet);
- Seek commitments from other persons or organisations such as subcontractors or agencies that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our organisation and our workforce;
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.

5: Monitoring and review

The College will maintain appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of this equal opportunities policy. This data is held by the Human Resources Department.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed, and the contents amended to reflect changes and/or developments in equality legislation. Consultation with the College's recognised trade unions will be a key element in any revision of this policy.

6: Complaints

Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the College's agreed procedures.¹ A copy of these procedures is available from the Head of Human Resources or any member of the HR team. They are also available on the College website: www.stran.ac.uk. All complaints of such discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

In addition to our internal procedures, employees have the right to pursue complaints of unlawful discrimination to an industrial tribunal or the Fair Employment Tribunal under the following anti-discrimination legislation:

- Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976, as amended
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended
- Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, as amended
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003
- Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, as amended
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006
- Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970, as amended.

However, employees wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint under our internal grievance procedures first².

Every effort will be made to ensure that employees who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.

Approved by the Governing Body: April 2013

For review: April 2015

¹ College Dignity at Work and Study Policy, College Staff Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures.

² For further information on the statutory disciplinary, dismissal and grievance procedures, see www.lra.org.uk or advisory publications of the Department for Employment and Learning at www.delni.gov.uk