



# Richmond upon Thames College

Subject:	Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
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Person responsible:	
Approved by:	Senior Leadership Team, Governors
For action by:	All staff and students
For information to:	All staff and students

## Policy Statement

RuTC has its students and staff at the heart of everything it does and we are mindful of the diverse needs of those we work with.

The ethos and philosophy of RUTC is to turn equality intent into equality action and to demonstrate this commitment in all that we do. We will ensure we remain a College that serves the community with our values and commitments to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Human Rights at the heart of our operation. This means listening to and understanding people's views, creating a working environment where everyone is treated with respect and able to contribute fully. And it means making sure everyone feels included and valued for what they bring to the organisation.

RUTC aims to create an environment where all individuals have the opportunity to achieve their full potential and gain a feeling of self-esteem and respect for and from all others. RUTC expresses its opposition to all forms of inequality and discrimination.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy demonstrates our commitment to ensuring we remain a College that serves the community with our values at the heart of its operation.

The Equality Duty does not require public bodies to treat everyone the same. Rather, it requires public bodies to think about people's different needs and how these can be met.

We believe:

- Diverse teams make better decisions and produce richer experiences.
- Listening to different points-of-view improves how we operate.
- Valuing our differences, as well as highlighting which we have in common, strengthens inclusion
- We respect all members of the College community
- We believe in the equal value of each individual
- We accept our changing responsibilities to the local and wider community
- We value mutual respect, honesty, integrity and personal accountability

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy underpins our values of the College. The College is proud of its diverse community and takes opportunities to celebrate, educate and value the differences between individuals within the whole college, local and wider community.

In order to further the aims of the general equality duty, the College will adopt the following overarching equality objectives:

- To continue to minimise achievement gaps between groups of students who share protected characteristics and those who do not.
- To ensure that all staff are representative of the diverse student population and contribute positively to the ethos of an inclusive College.

## Scope

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy is for all parties who operate in and with RUTC. These include (but are not limited to):

- Students
- Staff

- Parent / Guardians
- Governors
- Third party companies working with RUTC
- Stake holders
- Visitors

The Corporation of RUTC has an ultimate role in approving, championing, promoting and monitoring the Equality and Diversity Policy.

The following groups and post-holders have responsibilities for the development and implementation of policies relating to equality and diversity for staff and students.

The College Principals are responsible for managing RUTC's committees and boards to ensure compliance with legislation.

The CEO and Senior Leadership Teams are responsible for ensuring that the Equality and Diversity Policy is implemented in all aspects of its work. Related to this Strategy is the RUTC Mental Health Strategy and Mental Health Capacity Act Procedure.

The College will ensure there are designated senior officers with responsibility for equality and diversity for students at RUTC. The post holders will be responsible for raising awareness of equality and diversity procedures and practices among the student body across the three Colleges.

College Managers (Head of School/Curriculum Managers) are responsible for implementing the Equality and Diversity Policy in relation to staff and students in their curriculum School/service area.

The Human Resources Director is the designated senior officer with responsibility for equality and diversity for staff at RUTC. The HR Department is responsible for formulating, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the Equality and Diversity Policy in respect of staff and for raising awareness of equality and diversity procedures and practices among the staff.

The Equality and Diversity Forum/Committees have responsibility for monitoring equality and diversity practices across in their respective Colleges to provide guidance to staff and students on equality and diversity matters and to complete regular reviews and update of their Equality and Diversity activities.

Every staff member has an implied duty under their contract of employment to comply with the requirements of this policy. In addition, teaching staff and tutors will create a classroom environment where all students can thrive together and understand that individual characteristics make people unique and not 'different' in a negative way.

Teachers and tutors will work with HoS to provide opportunities within Schemes of Work to promote EDI. They will provide wherever possible, a diverse range of learning opportunities to facilitate access and achievement for the whole community.

Every student has an implied duty under the respective Student Charter and Code of Conduct to comply with the requirements of this policy.

Any individuals or organisations contracted within RUTC have an implied duty under their contract of employment to comply with the requirements of this policy.

Any students and staff working on placement outside RUTC will be asked to understand the policy requirements of that organisation, whilst ensuring they comply with this policy. RUTC will check that organisations who have students and staff on extended work placement at their premises seek to comply with RUTC Equality and Diversity Policy.

RUTC will challenge all forms of inequality, discrimination and harassment, and actively promote opportunities for the groups mentioned in 1.1 and foster good relations between them. This work is regarded as the responsibility of all staff in RUTC.

Any action which contravenes this policy renders individuals employed by RUTC or students liable for disciplinary action. Evidence of discrimination or harassment may be considered as gross misconduct. Clients or contractors who contravene the policy can expect appropriate action.

## **Background**

### Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 ([Equality Act 2010 guidance](#)) provides protection from discrimination in respect of particular “protected characteristics” which are defined as:

- age
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being [pregnant](#) or on maternity leave
- [disability](#)
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Act also protects against discrimination by association and perception, e.g. a partner or carer of someone with a protected characteristic should also be protected from discrimination and harassment.

Furthermore, RUTC recognises and extends this policy to include, socio-economic status, deprivation, homelessness, unemployment, asylum and refugee status or membership of a trade union, or for any other identifiable cause protected by law.

Under the Equality Act 2010, public sector organisations such as Colleges are also covered by the Public Sector Equality Duty ([PSED legislation](#)) and must have due regard to the need to:

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

RUTC must have due regard to these duties in the carrying out of its functions. Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the general duty as part of the process of decision-making.

For example, having due regard to the need to **advance equality of opportunity** involves considering the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics; and
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

**Fostering good relations** involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others

### **Specific duties**

The Public Sector specific duty requires all public bodies to publish information to demonstrate the extent to which it furthered the aims of the general equality duty.

Subsequent information must be published at least annually.

The regulations require public bodies to:

- Publish equality objectives every four years
- Publish information annually to demonstrate their compliance with the general Equality Duty;
- Publish information relating to their employees (for bodies with 150 or more staff) and others affected by their policies and practices (such as service users, e.g. students).

All information must be published in a way that is accessible to the public.

RUTC will uphold its public sector duty as outlined above and actively seek to ensure that both students and staff experience equality of opportunity and are free from harassment, discrimination or victimisation of any kind, regarding the protected characteristics. RUTC objectives will be published each year alongside an Annual Equality Report on the college websites.

### **Intent**

Through its recruitment, selection and admission procedures, RUTC will seek to ensure that it supports equality and diversity in all aspects of education and employment, so that the student body, workforce and Corporation reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

RUTC will seek to achieve equality for all students and to engage all learners, irrespective of their cultural background in all aspects of teaching, learning and support. It is committed to the attempt to 'narrow the gap' where students from one diversity strand achieve less well than those from other strands.

RUTC is committed to achieving equality for all staff in training, career development, promotion and reward, and will support staff to help them maximise opportunities to promote equality and diversity.

Any form of unfair discrimination against students or staff will be tackled effectively and with the aim of preventing such discrimination from occurring again in future.

Teaching materials and methods, and all forms of general communication with students will strive to be sensitive to different cultures and will seek to promote Equality and Diversity and foster good relations between people from different groups.

RUTC will support where possible efforts to rehabilitate ex-offenders. However, RUTC reserves the right to refuse such applications where it is concluded that admitting the individual concerned poses a danger to other students or staff or an unacceptable level of corporate risk. Applications to College courses from ex-offenders will be considered via a review panel making recommendations to the Principal.

Opportunities will be sought to extend the influence of RUTC's Equality and Diversity good practice to parents, Higher Education institutions and other partner organisations, employers with whom we work, the local community, and the FE sector generally.

## **Implementation**

Implementing equal opportunities is an ongoing process that will be regularly reviewed by RUTC's Senior Leadership Teams and the Equality and Diversity Forum/Committee

All staff will be made aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy during the induction process. Additional training will also be conducted for staff during whole College training days.

RUTC will produce an annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan to support the development and provision of equality and diversity. The action plan will be monitored by the Equality and Diversity Forum/Committee.

The Senior Leadership Teams will review all policies and procedures to ensure that a commitment to equality and diversity is continually evident. Equality Impact Assessments may be conducted on key strategic documents and projects and policies related to students and human resources at the time of their revision.

College marketing and support materials will seek to encourage applications and enquiries from all areas of the community, reflecting the ethos of this Equality and Diversity Policy. Core prospectus information will be provided in alternative formats on request.

RUTC aims to provide support services during enrolment and on programme to help in the identification of additional student support needs where necessary.

Equality and Diversity training, advice and guidance and support will be provided to ensure that all staff, students understand their duties and obligations in law.

RUTC will protect the confidentiality of disclosure of sensitive matters related to equality and diversity. If information needs to be shared, for example on the grounds of health and safety or criminal law, care will be taken to share only what is necessary and to record what was shared, with whom, and why.

RUTC will neither promote, nor permit the promotion of any one religious faith or culture. All individuals will be expected to adhere to College policies, rules and regulations, regardless of their personal faith or religion. Whilst RUTC resources exist primarily for the delivery of learning activities; arrangements will be made, where this is practicable, for staff or students to carry out essential religious observance. Dedicated facilities cannot be provided for particular faith groups. It will be at the discretion of RUTC whether lettings arrangements can be entered into with external faith based organisations. Arrangements will not be entered into where such an organisation seeks to promote others to its cause and where the event or activity is barred to those of different faiths or no faith.

Staff who believe they have not been treated in accordance with the Equality and Diversity

Policy may wish to make a complaint. This may be made either informally or formally in accordance with the Human Resources Policies and Procedures.

RUTC will consider it to be a disciplinary offence under this Policy if any employee makes a false accusation against another employee regarding an alleged breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

Students who believe they have not been treated in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Policy may wish to make a complaint. This may be either informally or formally in accordance with RUTC's Complaints Policy.

The Senior Leadership Teams and Heads of School/ (Senior) Curriculum Managers are responsible for dealing with complaints under this Policy. While it may be appropriate to deal with a complaint informally, it must be noted that any breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy may be grounds for disciplinary action under the Student/Staff Code of Conduct and Student/Staff Disciplinary/Capability Policy.

### **Impact**

RUTC will conduct comprehensive and effective monitoring of all aspects of the Policy, both on an ongoing basis and as education and employment policies and practices change. Benchmarking data will be sought for monitoring gender, ethnicity, age and disability.

The Senior Leadership Teams will receive data which will inform the planning process and the implementation of this Policy.

Monitoring will be undertaken in accordance with best practice recommendations, particularly from the following bodies:

OFSTED; the Association of Colleges; and  
The Equality and Human Rights Commission

RUTC will monitor the implementation of this Policy as part of annual training activities, through staff and student focus groups and staff exit interviews.

RUTC will publish the following documents on our website, and update them annually:

1. Annual Equality Report
2. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action plan

Publishing relevant equality information will make the College transparent about its decision-making processes, and accountable to their service users. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics; and
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low

1. Annual Equality Report (AER)

The College will publish annually data pertaining to the Equality Duty Act 2010.

This will be a collation of qualitative and quantitative data made available to the College. This could include (but not limited to) the following:

- Recruitment, retention, achievement and success.
- Attendance
- Enrichment
- Progression
- Learner satisfaction
- Change management
- Staff profile
- Staff development
- Socio-economic profile
- Student profile against the nine protected characteristics

The annual report on equality and diversity matters will be prepared and submitted to the Corporation each year prior to publication on the website.

## 2. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action plan

The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan published will:

- provide an overview of the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives and identified priorities
- link actions to the relevant requirement of the Equality Duty
- list the key actions required to achieve our objectives
- identify who is responsible
- suggest a timeframe for completion
- highlight the criteria that will tell us whether we've succeeded
- highlight the progress made and what else needs to be done

### **Promotion of Equality and Diversity**

RUTC will promote its equality and diversity policies and practices to staff through training, development and the induction programme for new staff.

All students will receive a briefing on equality and diversity during induction. Additional guidance will be available through RUTC's tutorial programme.

Copies of this policy will be made available on College websites and intranets.

Information on students and staff at RUTC will be made available on College websites and intranets, in line with the Public Sector Specific duties deriving from the Equality Act 2010.

RUTC will set, publish (on its websites) and evaluate equality objectives in line with the Public Sector Specific duties.

All College Policies will be required to promote and make appropriate reference to equality and diversity matters where appropriate.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with legislative and educational developments.

Associated documents

**The policy is supplemented by other policies such as:**

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Mental Health Policy
- GDPR Policy
- Gender Identity Policies