

LOWESTOFT COLLEGE
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
2009-2010

Date of Corporation approval; October 2003
Review Date: April 2010

Principal

1 Policy Statement

1.1 Lowestoft College aims to ensure that all actual or potential employees and students are treated equally, regardless of: age; disability; family responsibility; marital status; race; colour; ethnicity; nationality; religion or belief; gender; sexual orientation; trade union activity; unrelated criminal convictions; other irrelevant criteria.

2 Scope

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish clear college guidance regarding equality and to establish key principles, structures and monitoring arrangements for the college. The guidance should be applicable to all staff and students in the college.

3 Key Principles

3.1 The college believes that all forms of prejudice and discrimination ¹ are unacceptable. In recognition of the fact that they can take a variety of forms, depending on the group against whom they are directed, the college will adopt/develop policies embodying the issues specific to discrimination on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual Orientation

3.2 The college will seek to challenge inequality, prejudice and discrimination.

3.3 The college embraces diversity in all its aspects, and aims to welcome students, to employ a workforce which reflects, at every level, the local and wider community it serves.

3.4 Lowestoft College will treat all students and employees with respect and dignity, and seek to provide a learning and working environment free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation. Lowestoft College will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against its students or employees either from other employees, students, or members of the public.



¹ The term “discrimination” is used in this document to mean less favourable treatment of an individual on any of the grounds listed in Section 1.1

3.5 In seeking to achieve a balanced college community at all levels, Lowestoft College will ensure that no student, employee, job applicant or candidate for promotion will be disadvantaged, or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the job. Reasonable adjustments will be made to arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for disabled students and staff or potential students and staff.

3.6 In order to ensure that all staff and potential students and staff are treated with equality and fairness at all stages of learning or employment, and that their treatment is based solely on objective and job or learning related criteria, the college will ensure that equality issues are embedded into all its policies and procedures. These may include:

- Capability
- Conditions of Service
- Contract Terms [including fixed-term and casual]
- Discipline
- Employment of Part-time employees
- Equal Pay
- Family and Dependants Leave
- Grading
- Grievance
- Harassment and Bullying
- Induction
- Maternity Leave
- Parental Leave(including Paternity and Adoptive)
- Promotion
- Recruitment and Selection
- Sickness Leave
- Termination [including Redundancy]
- Training and Career Development

3.7 In ensuring that this policy is fully effective, and that all college students and staff are committed to it, the college undertakes to work locally in partnership with the recognised trade unions, and with students and staff in general, in its development and implementation.

4 Structures

4.1 The Corporation designates the Principal as having overall responsibility for equality issues. The designated person will ensure regular reports are made to the Corporation.

4.2 In recognition of the fact that implementation of robust equality measures requires time and expertise, the college will dedicate

appropriate time to staff specialising in this work and publicise these appointments throughout the college.

4.3 There will be a college Equal Opportunities Group chaired by the Vice Principal 14 -19. The membership of the Committee will include any staff involved with equality work and representatives of each trade union recognised by the college. The Equality Committee will include student representation.

4.31 The remit of the Equality Committee will be to promote policies and practices that ensure a college environment in which equality flourishes. To this end, it will develop policies related to the curriculum, student intake, the built environment, student services etc, which seek to ensure the removal of prejudice and discrimination. It is the responsibility of all staff and students to uphold the college policy on equality.

4.32 Employment policies and procedures will continue to be dealt with through existing consultation/negotiation arrangements, as appropriate.

4.33 The Equality Committee will periodically conduct equality audits of employment practices, to include, for example: recruitment, selection, training and promotion practices, pay, grading, termination procedures. The monitoring of staff will be undertaken in co-operation with the recognised trade unions as will the drawing up of a programme of equality training for staff.

4.34 The Equality Committee will set equality targets for all aspects of college life, develop action plans, analyse the statistics produced by monitoring and propose positive action where necessary.

5 Monitoring

5.1 The college undertakes to conduct comprehensive and effective monitoring of all aspects of staffing and the student body. Monitoring information will be collected and this will be reported to the College's Senior Management Team and Members of the Corporation.

5.2 The college is committed to the collection of statistics, analysis of data and presentation of data, as well as monitoring on an ongoing basis and as employment policy and practices change.

5.3 The college will use the two main forms of monitoring, i.e. of the composition of the existing workforce / student body and the recruitment process, looking at the workforce with reference to ethnicity, disability and gender, in particular.

5.4 The college will also categorise according to grade; contract type, i.e. whether full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary; age; length of time in post; place of work, salary and caring responsibilities. Records will be kept of training, appraisals, promotions, regradings and discretionary pay awards

5.5 After the employment relationship has ended, the college may retain statistics; data about the composition of the workforce, including appraisal and promotion records on an anonymous basis for the purpose of carrying out equal opportunities monitoring, and may also look at reasons for resignation and resignation rates.

5.6 Monitoring will be undertaken in accordance with best practice recommendations, particularly from bodies such as the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), and Disability Rights Commission (DRC), and with regard to data protection principles.

6 Positive Action

6.1 The college undertakes to follow positive action measures allowed by law to rectify disadvantages in employment and learning opportunities revealed by monitoring.

Positive action, allows the college to:

- provide facilities or service (in the form of training, education, or welfare) to meet the special needs of people from particular under-represented groups;
- target job training at particular groups that are under-represented in a particular area of work;
- encourage applications from groups that are under-represented in particular areas of work, or learning opportunities.

6.2 Positive action strategies are intended to be temporary measures only. They must be kept under regular review, and they cannot be used once the special needs have been met, or if under-representation no longer exists. The college will ensure that when using positive action as a strategy, it falls within the law.

7 General

7.1 If a student or employee believes they have not been treated fairly, due to prejudice, or discrimination, they should raise a complaint by using the Anti-Bullying Policy or Grievance Procedure.

8 Review

- 8.1 This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with legislative developments and the need for good practice, using the local consultation/negotiating arrangements within the college

Note

Definition of Joint Agreement

The Agreement on this guidance is intended as a recommendation to colleges relating to equality policies.

Appendix 1

Legislative Framework

Key legislative requirements relating to equality are identified in the following:

- Disability Discrimination Act
- Human Rights Act
- Race Relations Act
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Protection from Harassment Act 1974
- SENDA 2001
- Sex Discrimination Act