



## **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

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# **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, GOOD RELATIONS & CULTURAL DIVERSITY POLICY**

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<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Head of People & Culture
<b>Date Approved:</b>	18 June 2025
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<b>Equality Screening Date:</b>	17 April 2025
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<b>Location:</b>	Gateway & Website

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## 1. Introduction Policy Statement

- 1.1 South West College (the College) will treat everyone with respect and dignity and will seek to provide a positive learning and working environment for all.
- 1.2 The College is committed to equality of opportunity and good relations, and values the diversity of our staff. Furthermore, the College is an equal opportunities employer, is opposed to all forms of discrimination and is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations in its employment and working practices.
- 1.3 The College will promote a good and harmonious working environment in which applicants, employees and others who work in the College will be treated with dignity and respect, and we will not discriminate unlawfully against or harass any person on the grounds of:
  - Sex
  - Pregnancy or maternity
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marital or Civil partnership status
  - Religious or similar philosophical belief
  - Political opinion
  - Racial group
  - Sexual orientation
  - Disability
  - Age
- 1.4 The College will also endeavour to ensure that the workplace and our employment policies and practices do not unreasonably exclude or disadvantage those of our job applicants and employees who have disabilities. The College will comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments that are imposed on us in relation to such persons. We note that a failure to comply with that duty would be an act of unlawful discrimination.
- 1.5 Our commitment to a Good and Harmonious working environment is clear and, in Equality Commission guidelines all employees are required to comply with our

policy of not permitting the display of flags, emblems, posters or other similar material, the circulation of literature or other media or the articulation of songs, slogans or banter which may give offence or cause apprehension among any employees or members of the public.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all GB Members and staff of the College, and to job applicants to posts advertised by the College.

## **3. Policy Aim**

- 3.1 The aim of this policy is to:
- Outline our commitment to Equality of Opportunity and the promotion of Good Relations and is aligned to our anti-discrimination legislation as well as our public authority duty under Section 75 of NI Act 1998.
  - Ensure that good employment practices are used throughout the College, in particular to promote fair and non-discriminatory practices in recruitment, selection and promotion.
  - Ensure that the principles of Community Relations, equity, respecting diversity and interdependence are placed at the heart of the Colleges structures, systems and culture.
  - Provide reassurance that we have the highest expectation of all our staff when it comes to ensuring that our working and learning environment is inclusive, promotes equality and shows dignity and respect. Our Vision of “Developing People - Achieving Potential” is at the cornerstone of everything we do.

## **4. Employee Rights**

- 4.1 Our employees have a right to work in a good and harmonious environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and to raise a concern about such behaviour should it occur.

- 4.2 Any employee who is subject to actions which are contrary to the spirit and intention of this policy can seek redress through a range of avenues which are available within the College and are supported by a range of relevant policies and procedures as listed in the Related Documentation section of this policy.
- 4.3 These avenues include:
- The Dignity At Work Advisors,
  - The Equality and HR Officer
  - The Raising a Concern Champions.
- 4.4 Employees who make complaints of discrimination and harassment, and others who give evidence or information in connection with such complaints, will not be victimised (i.e. they will not be discriminated against or harassed in retaliation for their actions). Victimisation is also discrimination contrary to the equality laws and this policy.

## **5. Employee Responsibilities**

- 5.1 All employees must comply with this policy and have a personal responsibility for promoting and upholding the Principles of Equal Opportunities, Good Relations and Cultural Diversity. Employees must treat each other with dignity and respect and must not themselves commit any acts of unlawful discrimination or harassment against any other person, such as job applicants, colleagues, students, members of the public and third parties. Such behaviour will not be permitted or condoned. The College will treat such behaviour as misconduct, which may warrant dismissal from employment.
- 5.2 All employees should discourage discrimination and harassment by making it clear that they find such behaviour unacceptable and by supporting co-workers who suffer such treatment. Any employee who is aware of any incident of discrimination and harassment should alert a manager, supervisor, or the Raising a Concern Champion to enable the College to deal with it.
- 5.3 All employees must attend College Equal Opportunities/Cultural Diversity training as

required and complete all online mandatory training.

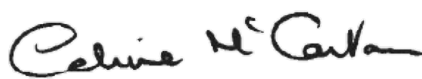
## 6. Employer Responsibilities


6.1 The College will make every effort in good faith to implement this policy. The College will:

- Provide all employees and managers with a copy of this policy and explain it to them.
- Ensure that all complaints of discrimination or harassment are dealt with promptly, seriously and confidentially and in accordance with our internal procedures.
- Set a good example by treating employees with fairness, dignity and respect.
- Provide access to the relevant Equality, Good Relations and Cultural Diversity Training.
- Be alert to unacceptable behaviour and take appropriate action to stop it.

## 7. Monitoring and Review

7.1 Responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy lies with the Head of People and Culture. This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Signed Principal and Chief Executive:   
 Date: 18/06/2025

Signed Chair of the Governing Body:   
 Date: 18/06/2025

## Related Documentation

Title	Location	Owner
Customer Complaints & Compliments Policy	Gateway	Head of Quality and Student Engagement
Dignity at Work Policy for Staff	Gateway	Head of People & Culture
Disciplinary Procedure – Support Staff	Gateway	Sector Policy Head of People & Culture
Disciplinary Procedure – Lecturing Staff	Gateway	Sector Policy Head of People & Culture
Dispute resolution procedure (Grievance)	Gateway	Head of People & Culture
Equality Scheme	Gateway	Head of People & Culture
Freedom to Speak Up; Raising A Concern Policy (and related procedures)	Gateway	Data Protection Officer
Individual Grievance Procedure for Teachers in Institutions of Further Education	Gateway	Sector Policy Head of People & Culture
Recruitment & Selection Policy	Gateway	Head of People & Culture
S75 Non-Compliance Complaints Policy	Gateway	Head of People and Culture

## Change Log

Location	Change from deletion/addition	Change to
	Changed to new format	
Employee Rights (4.3)	Equality Officer The Raising a Concern Champion	Equality and HR Officer The Raising a Concern Champions
Related Documentation	Policy owners updated throughout	
Document Development	Names and Job Roles updated throughout	

## Communication

<b>Who needs to know (for action)</b>	All Staff & Job Applicants
<b>Who needs to be aware</b>	All Staff & Job Applicants

## Communication Plan

Action	By Whom	By When
Upload to Gateway and Website	N Nugent	On approval
Circulation to key staff	Head of People & Culture	On approval

## Document Development

Details of staff who were involved in the development of this policy:

Name	Role
Camilla James	Head of People and Culture
Siobhan Gorman	Equality and HR Officer

Details of staff, external groups or external organisations who were consulted in the development of this policy:

Name	Organisation	Date
Trade Unions	SWC	14 October 2024
Management Operations Team	SWC	03 September 2024
Donal Collins	The Equality Commission	April 2025

## Approval Dates

Approved by	Date
Governing Body	18 June 2025



## Document History

Issue no. under review	Date of review:	Persons involved in review	Changes made after review? Yes/No If Yes refer to change log	New Issue No.	If changes made was consultation required?	If changes made was Equality Screening required?
V1.0	May 2025	Camilla James	Yes – minor	V2.0	No	no