

# **DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION POLICY 2021 - 2024**

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External queries relating to the document to be referred in the first instance to Simon Morris - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Champion, email: [smorris@grantham.ac.uk](mailto:smorris@grantham.ac.uk)

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Grantham College confirms its continuing commitment to the principles of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The production of our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Policy and our DEI Annual Report demonstrates this commitment. The College's existence and activities are determined by a belief in, and a desire to ensure that all members of the College have an equal opportunity to maximise their potential, are equally valued and treated with respect. The College endeavours to ensure that it provides an appropriate and professional service to people irrespective of age, disability, gender or gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity. The College recognises that, under the provisions of the Equality Act (2010) these constitute "protected characteristics". The College aims to eradicate processes, attitudes and behaviour that constitute discrimination through conscious or unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness or stereotyping.

The College seeks to provide employment, education and services in an environment in which diversity is valued. The College also strives to appreciate the capabilities, insights and ideas of all individuals.

We strive to be a fair organisation and one where everyone accepts the differences between individuals and values the benefits that diversity brings to the College.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Policy represents the College's values with regard to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The College:

- Values and respects difference both within the College and beyond with a commitment to place Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the centre of what we do and how we do it;
- Puts the interests of students first, whatever their background, standing up for the rights and opportunities of all those who use our services;
- Strives to make a difference and set challenging standards for all students and staff;
- Builds and maintains trust by behaving fairly and impartially in all our dealings with all members of the community.

This Policy is designed to reflect the College's Mission and Values. It also aims to demonstrate how the College will meet its commitments to equality of opportunity and valuing diversity. In doing so, it has four key functions:

1. To set a context in which the College currently operates using local trend data and demographics;
2. To lead to Action Plans and Equality Objectives which seek to eradicate or minimise negative impacts;
3. To monitor DEI Objectives, Action Plans and Impact Measures to remove any negative impacts and to identify any further areas for action;
4. To encourage, via positive action, any initiatives that promote the full engagement of all staff and students of the College.

An annual DEI Report is also published, once approved by the governing body, with staff and student data. These documents are published and accessible via the College website. Copies of the document in other formats are available by request.

## **THE EQUALITY ACT 2010**

The Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010 and aims to provide a simpler, more consistent and more effective legal framework for preventing discrimination. The stated aim of the Act is to reform and harmonise discrimination law, and to strengthen the law to support progress on equality. It replaces the following equality legislation:

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- The Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The College's DEI Policy addresses all the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010:

- Race
- Disability
- Sex
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion/Belief
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy & Maternity

The Equality Act 2010 extends some protections to characteristics that were not previously covered in law and also strengthens particular aspects of equality law. For the purposes of this document it may be helpful to define the types of discrimination the Act refers to in terms of the law.

### **TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION:**

#### **Direct discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perceptive discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see associated discrimination below).

#### **Associative discrimination**

Already applies to race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Now extended to cover age, disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

#### **Perceptive discrimination**

Already applies to age, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Now extended to cover disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

## **Indirect discrimination**

Already applies to age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership. Now extended to cover disability and gender re-assignment.

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if you can show that you acted reasonably in managing your business, i.e. that it is “a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim”. A legitimate aim might be any lawful decision you make in running your business or organisation, but if there is a discriminatory effect, the sole aim of reducing costs is likely to be unlawful.

## **Harassment**

Harassment is “unwanted conduct relating to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

Pregnancy and maternity is not protected directly under the harassment provisions, however, unwanted behaviour (as described above) will amount to harassment related to sex.

There are three types of harassment which are unlawful under the Equality Act:

1. Harassment related to a relevant protected characteristic.
2. Sexual harassment.
3. Less favourable treatment of a student because they submit to or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to sex.

Employees will now be able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves. Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

## **Sexual misconduct**

Sexual misconduct relates to all unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Sexual harassment
2. Unwanted conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment
3. Assault
4. Rape
5. Physical unwanted sexual advances
6. Intimidation, or promising resources or benefits in return for sexual favours
7. Distributing private and personal explicit images or video footage of an individual without their consent

This definition includes harassment and sexual misconduct through any medium, including, for example, online.

## **Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are

suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

There is no longer a need to compare treatment of a complainant with that of a person who has not made or supported a complaint under the Act.

## **THE COLLEGE'S COMMITMENT**

Grantham College is committed to creating a working, learning, cultural and social environment that is based on dignity and respect, where difference is valued and celebrated, enriching our community. We aim to ensure all staff and students are supported in being able to reach their full potential, to contribute fully, and derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the College.

To achieve this Grantham College lays out the following basic commitments. You can expect:

- To be treated with dignity and respect;
- Not to be bullied, harassed, abused, intimidated or victimised;
- To be provided with relevant support, guidance and training.

Your responsibilities are:

- To treat members of the College with dignity and respect, meeting the standards laid down in the policy and Equality Act 2010;
- Not to bully, harass, abuse or intimidate or victimise others;
- To ensure you have clear understanding of the College's core values;
- To positively support measures introduced to advance equality, diversity, inclusion and eliminate discrimination.

The College requires all members of our community to commit to these responsibilities, proactively supporting and upholding them at all times. In addition, Grantham College will comply with all relevant legislation and strive to go beyond the legal requirement through supporting, whenever possible, best practice in areas of equality, diversity and inclusion. We will also provide support, guidance and training to the college community to facilitate the delivery of these commitments.

The College has also adopted the IHRA working definition of antisemitism.

## **Responsibility**

The Principal and Chief Executive of Grantham College has overall responsibility of the Policy, and the operational aspects rest with dedicated staff across the College.

Nevertheless, despite these designated roles, all staff and students of the College have a responsibility to embed the College's values into their day-to-day activities.

An appointed member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and monitored.

Ultimately, the Board of Governors is accountable for ensuring the College complies with its legal obligations under the Equality Act, including the general duty to have due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity;
- Foster good relations.

The College's DEI Champion, in consultation with relevant College committees, is responsible for developing policy and best practice in order to support in meeting the legal requirements.

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