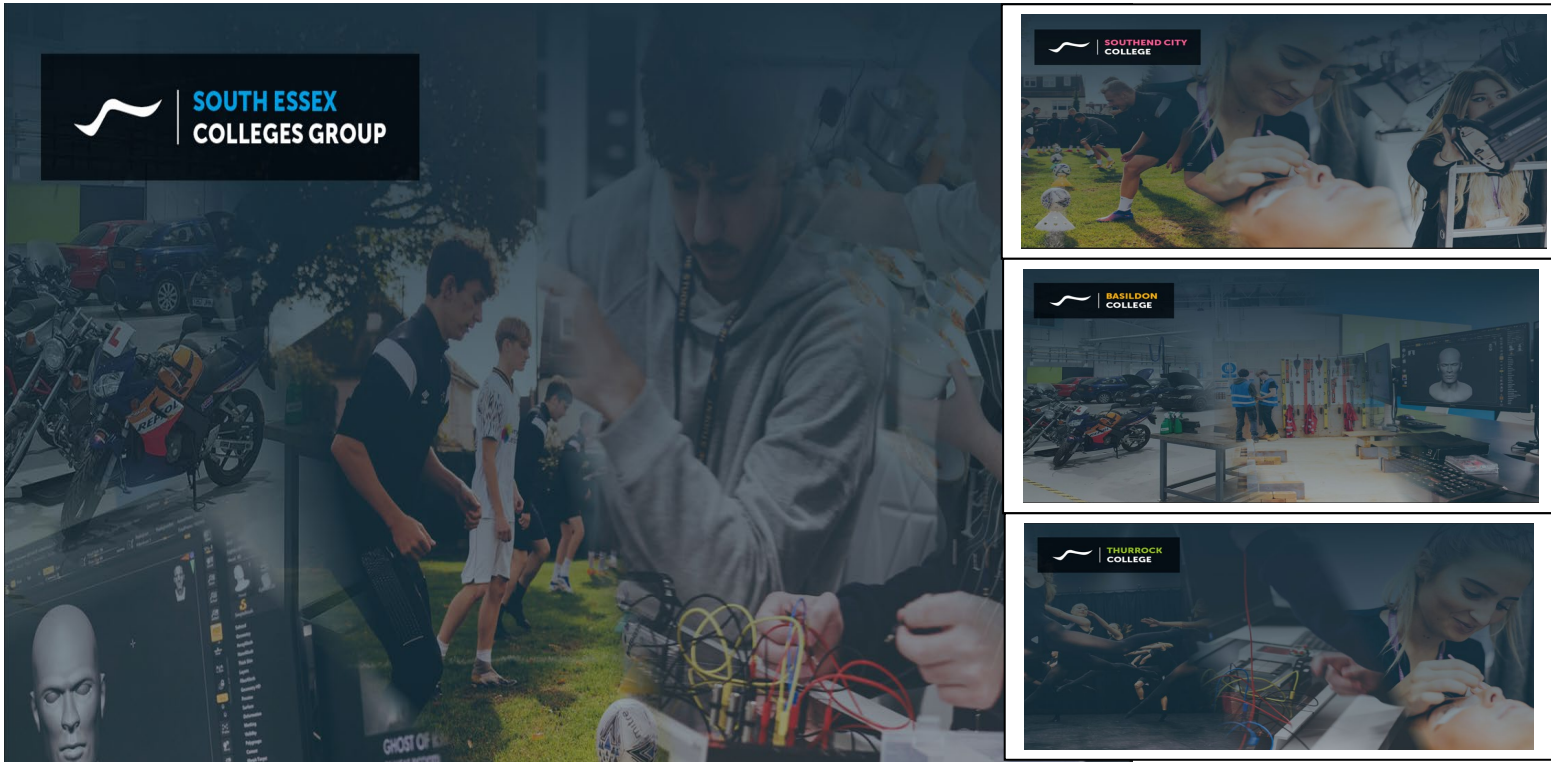


# College Policy



## Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

17 April 2024

# College Policy

## CHANGES FOLLOWING REVIEW

Page number, heading or area of the Document	Details of the significant changes	Changes made by
Section 1.3	Changed the word gender to sex	Roney Brooks
Section 1.6-1.8	Have removed the PROUD values and replaced with the new College Vision, Mission and Core Values statements.	Roney Brooks
New: Equality Impact Assessment	Decision made to include an equality impact assessment on all College Policies. Although not legally required it is considered best HR practice.	Roney Brooks

# College Policy

## Equality Impact Assessment

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of any new or amended policy, procedure, practice, project, function on different groups of staff, students and visitors to the college. This EIA tool provides a simple framework that helps evaluate whether the change may inadvertently disadvantage protected characteristics and identify ways to proactively advance and promote equality.

You will need to consider each of the equations and provide information as to consideration and any changes made in relation to Equality, diversity and inclusion.

Date EIA completed.	17 April 2024
Name of person responsible for completing the EIA	Roney Brooks,
Role of person responsible for completing the EIA	Executive Director, People & Organisational Development
Who is affected by the policy / decision / change	All staff employed directly by South Essex Colleges Group, and the wholly owned subsidiary companies, Prospects Learning Foundation Limited and The Backstage Centre Limited.
What's the reason for the new policy / change in policy, practice, process etc.	Planned review of policy which is completed at regular intervals.

You will need to consider whether its possible that the proposed new policy / change in policy /procedure/practice etc could discriminate or unfairly discriminate or disadvantage people. You should consider:

Who gets to participate	Who does not, or who now does not due to the changes proposed / made.
Who is at an advantage	Who is at a disadvantage, and again has this changed?
Who will benefit	Who will not benefit (or who did and now doesn't due to the changes proposed in policy
Who can access the policy	Who cannot, or now cannot.

## College Policy

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Age	1	Non identified	Non identified	N/A
Disability	1	Non identified	None identified	N/A
Gender (Sex)	1	Non identified	None identified	N/A
Gender Reassignment	1	None identified	None identified	N/A
Marriage or Civil Partnership	1	None identified	Non identified	N/A
Pregnancy / Maternity	1	None identified	None identified	N/A
Race	1	None identified	None identified	N/A
Religion or Religious Belief	1	None identified	None identified	N/A
Sexual Orientation	1	None identified	None identified	N/A
Any other element that needs to be considered.	1	None identified	None identified	N/A
				N/A

**Note:**

1. The terms stated under protected characteristics are the terminology used in the Equality Act 2010.
2. As part of the policy approval process Executive Board will consider the EIA assessment and any potential barriers which we may not be able to overcome and whether the action proposed will mitigate sufficiently within legislation or whether we decide to not implement the new policy if the risk are significant. If the policy is approved the EIA is also approved.

# College Policy

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### 1: Policy Statement

- 1.1 South Essex College celebrates and values the diversity of our learners and employees and is committed to inclusion, equality of opportunity for all. The College is firmly committed to sustaining a highly effective learning and working environment characterised by fairness, equality of opportunity and valuing diversity. This policy intends to provide general guidance and advice to Managers, employees, students/apprentices and visitors to our premises.
- 1.2 We want to ensure that people with diverse characteristics and backgrounds consider the College to be an inclusive learning provider and employer of choice. We want everyone that works or learns with South Essex College to reach their full potential, in an inclusive environment which is respectful and accepts individual differences.
- 1.3 At the College we celebrate and value diversity, and are committed to ensuring everyone feels included and in advancing equality of opportunity, regardless of age, disability, sex or gender identity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or social background and family responsibilities. This includes people for socially disadvantaged families as well as from deprived or remote geographical areas.
- 1.4 In particular, the College strives to:
  - a) Encourages the participation of learners of all abilities and differences
  - b) Provide a safe and welcoming physical and learning environment
  - c) Develop its facilities and courses to improve access and widen participation
  - d) Offer support to meet individual learner and employee needs
  - e) Ensure its recruitment process is fair and transparent and removes any potential barriers for individuals.
  - f) Ensure that the College is an environment that is free from discrimination, bullying or harassment.
- 1.5 This policy should be viewed in the context of the Equality Act 2020 and the extent of protection it provides. The College has policies and procedures in place across all aspects of work at the College and they will all consider Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity as part of their operation and practice in implementation. This policy should be read in conjunction with:
  - a) Equality Act 2020 (and any subsequent amendments)
  - b) Complaints and Compliments Procedure
  - c) Health and Safety Policy
  - d) Safeguarding Policy
  - e) Student Admissions Policy
  - f) Student behaviour management policy and procedure
  - g) Student bullying and harassment policy and procedure
  - h) Teaching, Learning and assessing Strategy

# College Policy

- i) The Public Sector Equality Duty
- j) PREVENT strategy
- k) For Staff, all Human Resources Policies and Procedures, including but not limited to:
  - Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
  - Pay and Retention Policy and Procedures
  - Disciplinary and Grievance Policy and Procedures
  - Induction Policy
  - Performance Management Guidelines
  - Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure

## 1.6 Our Vision:

1.6.1 We are the heart of community transformation.

## 1.7 Our Mission

1.7.1 Working together, we will provide knowledge, education and skills development for all.

## 1.8 Our Core Values

1.8.1 The core values of the College have been developed following consultation with staff and students and are shown below. Action is being taken to embed them into college life.

- We are a community of professionals inspiring our learners to be extraordinary in all they do.
- We are accepting and encouraging of all who come through our doors.
- Stimulated by modernity, we are diverse in thought, identity and aspiration.
- We are powerful and ambitious as individuals and powerful together. We encourage performance to the peak of ability.
- To build resilience, we provide a tough love environment supporting each other and our learners to thrive in all situations.

## 2.0 Principles

2.1 The College celebrates and values the diversity of our students/apprentices and employees and is committed to equality of opportunity for all. The College resolves to eliminate discrimination or other unfair treatment against any of our students/apprentices, employees, potential team members and any other person who uses our services or comes on our premises.

2.1.1 The College wishes to be recognised as an organisation which provides excellent employment and educational opportunities within an inclusive working and learning environment. We are committed to complying with the relevant legislation and where possible will endeavour to exceed this creating a culture of inclusivity where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. South Essex College does not tolerate any prejudicial behaviour by any member of the College.

# College Policy

## 2.2. Our Commitment:

### 2.2.1 Marketing and Access to Learning

- a) College policy and learning recruitment procedures will be designed to encourage applications from all sections of our community and from all levels of ability and will be available in a range of formats.
- b) The College will ensure that admission procedures are user friendly and avoid unnecessary barriers to access for potential students/apprentices.
- c) The College will continue to identify and respond to learning needs within the community and will encourage widening participation from underrepresented, disadvantaged or excluded groups.
- d) Make clear our expectations and commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion in our marketing materials and events, during the student admissions process and again during induction.
- e) Equality opportunities data will be collected, analysed and shared, to inform the planning and decision-making of all our processes that affect Students/apprentices.

### 2.2.2 The Learning Environment

- a) The College is committed to the development of an inclusive learning environment that are welcoming and safe for all learners.
- b) The College will continue to develop its facilities and accommodation to improve access for learners with learning difficulties and or disabilities.
- c) Through a multi-agency approach, the College will meet the targets surrounding Every Child Matters Strategy:
  - Be healthy
  - Stay safe
  - Enjoy and achieve
  - Make a positive contribution, and
  - Achieve economic well-being

### 2.2.3 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- a) Delivery teams will ensure that teaching, learning and assessing materials and delivery methods are free from bias, avoid stereotyping and discrimination.
- b) Delivery staff will ensure opportunities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion are incorporated into the curriculum delivery.
- c) Delivery teams providing tutorials and reviews will encourage learners to explore and promote equality and diversity.
- d) Awareness raising of equality and diversity issues will be part of the general student induction and tutorial programmes.
- e) The College will ensure that students/apprentices with learning difficulties and / or disabilities receive appropriate additional support to meet individual student needs to reach or exceed their potential.

## College Policy

- f) Provide a range of support services and facilities which will enable our students/apprentices with particular physical, social or cultural needs to participate in college life. These may include but are not limited to:
  - Tutorial support
  - Additional learning support
  - Financial and welfare advice
  - Personal counselling
  - Social / recreational / catering facilities
  - Designated areas such as; a multi faith room
- g) Delivery teams will regularly review course design and delivery to meet the various learning needs to improve access to learning.
- h) The College will ensure that the views and perceptions of students/apprentices are included in the process of curriculum review and self-assessment and also curriculum development.
- i) Resources will be made available in formats to meet the needs of individual students/apprentices including the use of specialist equipment where appropriate.

### 2.2.4 Recruitment, Training and Development

- a) The College will treat all team members with respect and dignity and seek to provide a working environment free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation. The College will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against any staff member, students/apprentices, employers or members of the public.
- b) Individual training and development needs identified either College wide or through Performance and Development Reviews may be organised as appropriate.
- c) Work towards the achievement of a workforce that is representative of the diversity of the communicates from which we recruit and the student population.
- d) Ensure progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- e) Ensure all policies and procedures promote equality of opportunity and are not unlawfully discriminatory in their operation.
- f) Applicants are not treated less favourably because of disability, age, gender (sex), race, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment and sexual orientation.

### 2.3 Equality Act 2010 Legislation

The College will abide by its current statutory duties for students/apprentices and team members, in line with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and resulting duty to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation (harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act).
- b) Advance equality of opportunity (between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it), and
- c) Foster good relations between different groups (between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it).

### 3.0 Scope and Limitation



# College Policy

- 3.1 This is the overarching policy on equality and diversity that applies across all areas of the College, including, employment, teaching, learning and assessing, procurement and marketing and admissions. This policy should not be read in isolation but cross referenced and with all associated policies, procedure and practices, as listed herein.
- 3.2 The College will operate within the legislative framework of the Equality Act 2020. This policy applies to all team members, temporary staff from employment agencies, contractors, visitors, employers and students/apprentices. The procedures set out in this policy are intended for implementation across all our premises, whether owned or leased. The College views discrimination against any student or team member on any grounds as a serious disciplinary offence.
- 3.3 The College will not tolerate any forms of discrimination based upon:
- a) Direct discrimination
  - b) Indirect discrimination
  - c) Associative discrimination
  - d) Harassment
  - e) Victimisation
  - f) Third party harassment
- 3.4 The College will not tolerate any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment on the grounds of:
- a) Age, disability, gender (sex); gender reassignment, maternity and pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership or socio-economic status.

Breaches of this policy will be regarded as misconduct and will therefore be subject to the student and employee Disciplinary policies.

## 4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 This policy applies to all employees, including agency workers, students/apprentices, employers, work placement providers, visitors and contractors working on campus and sub-contractors.
- 4.1.1 Board of Governors;**  
It is the responsibility of the Principal and Group Chief Executive and governors to ensure that the College meets its legislative responsibilities in respect of equality, diversity and including and for receiving and responding to monitoring information.
- 4.1.2 Senior Leadership Team**
- Ensuring that the College is meeting its legal obligations in relation to equality;
  - Ensuring that team members and students/apprentices are familiar with their roles and responsibilities in the context of this policy.

# College Policy

- Is committed to providing training and support in equality and diversity, bullying & Harassment and Sexual Harassment to promote a positive and inclusive culture for learning and work.

## 4.1.3 Leadership and Management Team

- Fostering an inclusive culture in which equality and diversity considerations are embedded in all aspects of College life.
- Ensuring team members and students/apprentices are encouraged and enabled to meet or exceed their full potential.
- Identifying appropriate staff development to meet the needs of staff a
- Promote equal opportunities in all aspects of their roles
- Ensuring procedures relating to staff recruitment and selection, career development, performance and development reviews, disciplinary and grievance are carried out in accordance with their statutory duties and College policies and eliminate any bias or discrimination.
- Ensuring that all materials and resources are shared fairly

## 4.1.4 Human Resources Department:

- Supporting managers in managing equality and diversity and provide advice and guidance.
- Ensuring that procedures relating to staff recruitment, selection, career development, performance management, discipline and grievance are carried out in accordance with statutory duties and promote equality and eliminate bias, stereotyping and discrimination.
- Regularly reviewing the Policy and amending as required with the Principal and Chief Executive and SMT.
- Responsible for compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and Equality Act, relating to the collating, monitoring and analysis of the equality data and reporting the data and taking appropriate action if trends or concerns are identified.
- Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to work arrangements and premises to ensure current and potential new team members with a disability have quality of access, when information is disclosed.

## 4.1.5 All staff, students/ apprentices

- Complying with the policy aims
- Be responsible for their own conduct and how this may affect others
- Promoting equality and opportunity
- Contributing to a safe and inclusive environment that celebrate diversity
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour by students/apprentices and their employers, placement providers, outside contractors and other team members. It is the duty of all team members and students/apprentices to avoid unfair discriminatory practices.

4.1.6 The College is committed to the general health and well-being of our students/apprentices and team members, and encourages them to develop positive relationships, to respect others and to celebrate diversity. Bullying or discrimination or any other form of discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated. Safeguarding procedures are in place to ensure that students/apprentices have a safe and secure environment.

# College Policy

4.1.7 The College will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who make claims of discrimination or harassment according to the policies detailed in this document.

## 4.2 Implementation Arrangements

4.2.1 Team members and students/apprentices and their employers are to be made aware of this policy and procedure. New team members and students/apprentices are to be made aware of this policy and procedure during the formal College induction process. Updated and amended procedures will be disseminated and reinforced in training sessions and team meeting, and as part of teaching, learning and assessing practice.

4.2.2 This policy and procedure is made available on the College intranet, student Moodle messages, and on the College website. This is therefore available to team members, students/apprentices and their parents / guardians, sub-contractors and agency workers, along with anyone accessing our premises or services will also have access. Other formats can be made available by contacting [departmentofhumanresources@southessex.ac.uk](mailto:departmentofhumanresources@southessex.ac.uk)

## 5.0 Monitoring and Review

5.1 The Equality and Diversity Policy is subject to regular review. The policy and the implementation arrangements which underpin it will be formally reviewed on an annual basis. This review will consider the views of team members and students/apprentices and the relevant legislation.

5.2 The College monitors the profile of our students/apprentices and team members in accordance with the protected characteristics as referred to in section 3.4 subject to the availability of information. Monitoring student equality information is undertaken by the College Information Services Department and for staff is the Human Resources Department.

5.3 Data collected for monitoring purposes will be published on the College website annually, by 31 January each year in line with our Public Sector Duty and responsibilities. The information will be reported to the Senior Leadership Team in respect of staff data, and annually to the Board of Governors. The presentation of such information shall observe the College's legal and contractual responsibilities in respect of individual confidentiality particularly in regard to sensitive data and will not unnecessarily identify individuals.

5.4 Equality data for students/apprentices is captured during enrolment, retention, achievement and in any student surveys. This information is reviewed annually, and information shared with Senior Leadership Team.

5.5 Complaints made to the College on grounds associated with equality and diversity are actioned and analysed to establish any trends.

## 6.0 College Systems

6.1 The following systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the equality and diversity data and impact on the College:

# College Policy

- a) HR information management system (SelectHR)
- b) College Student Record System
- c) Annual Equality Staff Data Report
- d) Complaints received and data analysis
- e) The Strategic Plan
- f) Cycle of self-assessment
- g) Curriculum planning
- h) Staff and student surveys
- i) Collecting and disseminating examples of good practice
- j) Monitoring activity

## 7.0 Definitions

7.1 The following definitions will apply:

Language	Definition
Protected Characteristics	The grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful.
Direct Discrimination	Occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have.
Associative Discrimination	Already applies to race, religion or belief and sexual orientation, age, disability, gender assignment and sex. It occurs when you treat people less favourably because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic (excluding pregnancy or maternity).
Perceptive Discrimination	Already applies to age, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This is now extended to cover disability, gender reassignment and sex. It means direct discrimination occurs against an individual because others think they have a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person doesn't actually possess that characteristic.
Indirect Discrimination	<p>Already applies to age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, disability and gender reassignment.</p> <p>Indirect discrimination can occur when the College has a condition, criteria rule, or policy that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. It doesn't matter if it was unintentional, it matters if your action disadvantages a person compared with a person who does not share that characteristic.</p>
Harassment	Is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which as the purpose or effect of violating and individual's dignity or creating and intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Harassment applies to all

# College Policy

Language	Definition
	<p>protected characteristics except for pregnancy, maternity, marriage and civil partnership.</p> <p>Team members will be able to complain of behaviour they find offensive, even if it is not directed at them. Team members do not need to possess the relevant characteristic themselves and are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.</p>
Third Party Harassment	<p>Applies to sex, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The Equality Act makes the College potentially liable for harassment of team members and students/apprentices by people (third parties) such as clients or customers, contractors of the employer / provider.</p> <p>For an employer to be liable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The harassment must have occurred on at least two previous occasions (although not necessarily by the same harasser or suffering the same type of harassment)</li> <li>• It must be aware that the previous harassment has taken place; and</li> <li>• It must have failed to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment from happening again.</li> </ul>
Victimisation	<p>Occurs when a team member 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. If you treat a person less favourably, because of this, then this will be classed as unlawful victimisation.</p> <p>A 'protected act' is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making a claim or complaint of discrimination (under the Equality Act).</li> <li>• Helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information.</li> <li>• Alleging that you or someone else has breached the Act.</li> <li>• Doing anything else in connection with the Act.</li> </ul> <p>(Source: The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) 2012)</p>
Failure to make reasonable adjustments	<p>Happens when the College fails to make reasonable adjustments for a disabled person, to avoid the disabled person being placed at a substantial disadvantage when compared to a non-disabled person.</p>

# College Policy

## 8.0 Supporting and Related Information

### 8.1 Complaints

8.1.1 All complaints relating to harassment and bullying will be dealt with using the Student Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure if student and if staff, the College staff Grievance Policy and Procedure.

8.1.2 If you have any concerns, you can email any of the following:

Executive Director People & Organisational Development: [roney.brooks@southessex.ac.uk](mailto:roney.brooks@southessex.ac.uk)

Head of Welfare & Safeguarding: [jane.belcher@southessex.ac.uk](mailto:jane.belcher@southessex.ac.uk)

College Suggestions: [suggestions@southessex.ac.uk](mailto:suggestions@southessex.ac.uk) (Emails will only be seen by the Senior Leadership Team and Executive Director, People & Organisational Development at this email address)

**Students:** Your Tutor, Course Team Leader, Curriculum Manager, Head of School or College Principal

### 8.2 Useful sources of information:

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

[www.equalities.gov.com](http://www.equalities.gov.com)

[www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

## 9. Breach of the Policy

9.1 The College will take seriously any instances of non-adherence to the Policy, by students/apprentices, staff, contractors or visitors. Any instances of nonadherence will be investigated with the intent of resolving matters. Where appropriate instances may be considered under the relevant disciplinary policy and procedures.

9.1.1 The College strongly encourages informal and local resolution of issues or complaints.

9.1.2 The College offers a mediation service to support staff and students/apprentices to this end.

Policy End

# College Policy



<b>Senior Leadership Responsibility</b>	Principal & Chief Executive
<b>Policy Author</b>	Executive Director, People & Organisational Development
<b>Roles Responsible for Reviewing</b>	Executive Director, People & Organisational Development Executive Board Members Other Staff as appropriate
<b>Issue date of current version</b>	17 April 2024
<b>Date to be reviewed</b>	31 March 2025
<b>Type of Policy</b>	Public / Internal