



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1 . Purpose

St Vincent College values equality and diversity and is committed to promoting mutual respect throughout the College community. The purpose of the policy is to establish clear guidance regarding equality and diversity and to establish the principles, structures and monitoring arrangements for the College. The policy will also enable the College to be proactive in promoting equality and diversity in order to ensure all individuals experience equality of opportunity.

2. Equality Duty

2.1 The College's Equality and Diversity policy demonstrates our commitment to the values of the Equality Act 2010 which provides a single overriding legal framework to replace all of the different equality laws. It is the College's policy to treat people equally, irrespective of:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Socio-Economic background
- Marital or family status and civil partnership
- Pregnancy, maternity or paternity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation (LGBT)

2.2 Equality and Diversity is more than simply meeting these legal requirements. It is about making a positive difference to the lives of the people we serve, treating all people with dignity and respect and recognising the value of each individual as a unique member of the College community. The College has a clear vision and a set of core values which enables it to be committed to eliminating inequitable treatment, advancing equality of opportunity for all and fostering good relations between different people throughout the organisation.

2.3 Details of compliance with our statutory duty are provided in the College's Statement of Compliance and Equality Objectives (Appendix A) and the Law on Equal Treatment (Appendix B).

3. Key Principles

3.1 The College's Equality and Diversity policy and Single Equality Scheme addresses the College's legal duties and responsibilities to equality and diversity. The aim of the College Equality and Diversity policy is to eliminate and, ideally prevent, all forms of unfair discrimination that might occur in the College.

- 3.2 St Vincent College believes that all forms of prejudice and discrimination 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 adapt/develop policies embodying the issues specific to discrimination. Any breach of those policies may result in disciplinary action being taken. The College will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against its stakeholders.
- 3.2 The College will seek to challenge inequality, prejudice and discrimination and aims to create a diverse student body/workforce which reflects the community it serves. It will seek to promote greater participation of under-represented groups of students/staff by encouraging positive action to address inequality. The College aims to foster good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.3 The College will treat all stakeholders with respect and dignity and seek to provide a learning/work environment free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation. Details relating to the recruitment and conduct of employees are provided in Appendix C of this policy.
- 3.4 It must be noted that although St Vincent College will not accept any form of discrimination, there may be limited circumstances justifying different treatment, which are not unlawful.

4. Policy Implementation

- 4.1 This policy applies to all stakeholders at St Vincent College. The Corporation and Senior Management Team are responsible for ensuring that all staff, students, service providers and visitors are aware of the rights and responsibilities with regard to equality. Equal opportunity is about treating everyone fairly by ensuring that services and facilities are accessible to all. It encompasses the methods of work, attitude and behaviour of our community within the College and at additional College sites and on College activities whether they are students, staff, employers or visitors.
- 4.2 Diversity can be defined as the visible and non-visible differences that characterise people. The College welcomes diversity, and seeks to ensure that individual talents are utilised and valued, thus promoting a diverse study body and workforce. The College wishes to create a culture where mutual trust and respect are the foundation for all professional relationships.
- 4.3 The College does not tolerate infringements of its Equality and Diversity policy and procedures. If proven, an infringement would be considered gross misconduct and dealt with through either the staff or student disciplinary procedures as appropriate.
- 4.4 The College will show its commitment to Equality and Diversity by having a clear statement in reception for all staff, students and visitors which communicates our policy and procedures. There is a specific Equality and Diversity Committee who lead on the development of this area. All staff are provided with training and support

regarding equality and diversity which is also covered via the college tutorial programme and themed events. This is supported by displays and information posted around the campus relating to equality and diversity.

4.5 Students

- 4.5.1 A clear statement of our intention with regard to Equality and Diversity is provided during induction and in the content of the USB sticks allocated to students. The policy and procedures are covered in the initial induction period and tutorials for all our students. Information can also be found on the college website and Moodle.
- 4.5.2 The College will treat all students with dignity, respect and as individuals in the provision of access to facilities, learning opportunities and support. Where appropriate, course structures will be designed in a flexible way in relation to life circumstances and learning needs of the students. The curriculum will be devised to positively promote and advance all aspects of Equality and Diversity. All curriculum areas through their Self-Assessment Reviews (SAR) and improvement plans monitor Equality and Diversity. Lesson observations also take into account and report on Equality and Diversity in lessons.
- 4.5.3 Students are given opportunities to feedback on the College's response to equality and diversity through cross-college surveys and course specific questionnaires. The Student Union undertakes responsibility for progressing equality and diversity in the college and has the opportunity to report back on any matters related to equality and diversity to the Corporation and Senior Management Team.

4.6 Staff (see Appendix C)

- 4.6.1 The College's recruitment and selection process will be free from bias and discrimination. Recruitment procedures will be conducted objectively and any decision regarding an applicant's suitability for a post will be based upon specific, non-discriminatory job related criteria. Details relating to the recruitment and conduct of employees is provided in Appendix C (Equality – Recruitment and Conduct of Staff) of this policy.
- 4.6.2 All employees will be treated with dignity and respect. The Senior Management Team will make every effort to provide a working environment which is free of discrimination or harassment in any form. All staff are expected to make a positive difference to the people we serve and work with, treating all with dignity and respect and recognising the value of each individual.
- 4.6.3 Clear guidelines are set out for all staff in the staff handbook and related policies and procedures. All staff are expected to adhere to the guidelines related to the equality and diversity.

4.7 Contractors, Subcontractors and Service Providers

4.7.1 The College has contracts with many organisations and individuals other than staff or students. Examples include suppliers, contractors engaged to carry out work for the College and employers offering work experience to students. The College will ensure these suppliers, contractors, employers or others who provide a service to the College have access to this policy.

4.7.2 All contractors will be required to comply in full with this policy. Failure to do so will result in an investigation which could result in the termination of the contract or service provision.

5. Complaints and dealing with discrimination, harassment and bullying

5.1 The College will ensure that every support and assistance is provided to students, staff, contractors or visitors who consider they have been a victim of discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying.

5.2 All acts pertaining to 5.1 by staff or students shall be treated as disciplinary offences. Individuals can be held personally liable for acts of discrimination and/or victimisation, which they commit, authorise, contribute to or condone. In serious cases this may lead to dismissal through the disciplinary procedures for staff or exclusion for students.

5.3 The College has a separate Bullying and Harassment Policy which defines the procedures to be used. Staff and students experiencing any form of bullying and harassment should refer to the specific policies and procedures.

5.4 If any student, member of staff, sub-contractor or visitor who believes they have not been treated fairly, due to prejudice, or discrimination within the scope of this procedure, they may raise the matter through the Complaints and Grievance Procedure. If the matter relates to sexual or racial harassment then the grievance may be raised using the Harassment at Work policy. Both documents may be obtained from the Personnel Department or are available on the college Intranet.

5.5 Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or breached this policy in any way will be subject to action under the College's Disciplinary Procedure, up to and including dismissal. The College Disciplinary procedure can be found on the intranet or from the Personnel Department. See also, Appendix B.

5.6 The governing Body and Senior Management Team of St Vincent College will also take seriously any malicious or, in its opinion unwarranted allegations of discrimination, and will take appropriate and swift action where necessary.

6. Responsibility for Implementation

6.1 The Corporation and Senior Management Team are responsible for ensuring the College meets all aspects of the Equality Act 2010. This includes meeting the general equality duty and also the specific duties which apply to all public authorities. The Governing Body designates the Principal as having ultimate responsibility for the

effective implementation of the policy. The Assistant Principal (Students & Community) will oversee the implementation of this policy.

- 6.2 Equality and Diversity relating to staff is monitored by Governors at the Resources Committee. Equality and Diversity relating to students is monitored by Governors at the Students & Community Committee. Membership of both Committees includes Senior Management and members of the Corporation and sit once a term
- 6.3 All staff and students are personally responsible for ensuring that they act within the law. All staff and students should ensure that they:
- Act in accordance with this policy and other College policies such as the Harassment and Bullying at Work Policy
 - Are able to identify and recognise incidents of bias, stereotyping and inequality, and are able to challenge if necessary.
 - Report any incidents of bias, stereotyping, discrimination and inequality
 - Promote equality of opportunity and good working relations, to avoid discrimination against anyone for reasons outlined in point 1.1 of this policy
 - Have an awareness of the law on discrimination and equality of opportunities
 - Take up training, development and learning opportunities.
- 6.4 In terms of the specific duty the Corporation and Senior Management Team will publish relevant information on the College website to demonstrate its compliance with the Equality Act.

All personal information collated for the purpose of the equality and diversity monitoring will be treated as confidential and not misused in accordance with the Data Protection Act, 1998.

The College will publish information relating to equality and diversity via:

- Equality and Diversity Statement of Compliance
- Equality and Diversity Objectives
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Corporation Meeting minutes

- 6.5 The Senior Management Team will report annually to the Students & Community Committee of the Governing Body regarding progress made against the equality objectives and action plan.

7. Continued Effectiveness of the Policy

- 7.1 The College policy will be reviewed annually by the College's Equality and Diversity Committee with recommendations for development or change made to the Senior Management Team. The Committee will meet termly to discuss matters relating to equality and diversity and will recommend further action for consideration by the Senior Management Team.



EQUALITY ACT 2010

Statement of Compliance and Equality Objectives

1. Introduction

Under the Equality Act 2010, St Vincent College recognises its statutory duty with regard to the key values of Equality (for all), Diversity and Inclusion. These values are reflected in the College Strategic Priorities and the College Single Equality Plan (2011-2014).

This documents provides the College's Statement of Compliance and equality objective related to our statutory duty. The legal framework and obligations within which all public bodies are required to operate with due regard to the Equality Act 2010, are defined thus:

2. General Public Sector Duties

2.1 **The College is subject to the public sector duty and the primary aim of this duty is to promote equality for all. These actions are recorded through:**

- The publishing of information in an accessible form for all to read
- The stating and showing of compliance with the Equality Duty
- The Setting and publishing of equality objectives

All are part of the specific duties required of public bodies.

2.2 **It is mandatory that the college must consider "due regard" and is required to our public duty under the Equality Act 2010. This has three aims under the general duty for Schools and Colleges:**

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These can be described as the three aims of the Equality Duty.

3.1 **The College aims to encourage the growth and progression of equality and to**

foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not through the following actions:

- Identify, remove and/or minimise any disadvantages suffered by those sharing a relevant protected characteristic.
- Challenge prejudice and promote understanding between people from different groups of those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Encourage those who share a protected characteristic to engage fully in all activities related to public life where historically, there is a recognised and disproportionately low number.

4. The College has a commitment to comply with the legal requirements as outlined by the General Public Sector Equality Duty. This will include the publishing of relevant and appropriate information to demonstrate the College's compliance the Equality Duty and in line with the timescales set by this legislation. The published information will include the following:

- The effect that policies and practices have on those identified as having a/some protected characteristic(s).
- Analysis of equality measures that have been undertaken
- Equality objectives
- Details of engagement and service outcomes for people with different protected characteristics.

3.2 To comply with the stated duties, the College will:

- Undertake equality analysis on all policies, procedures and significant decisions made.
- Gather information in respect of all protected characteristics and manage related outcomes and issues.
- Identify equality objectives
- Initiate wider contacts with the community and outside agencies for guidance and support related to equality and diversity.

EQUALITIES INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, gender, gender confirmation, age, pregnancy and maternity, sex and sexual orientation, religion and belief, socio-economic and marriage and civil partnership)

This information should also be read in conjunction with our equality objective(s). In compiling this equality information, we have:

- Identified evidence of equality we already have within policies and practice and identified gaps.
- Examined how we engage with the protected groups, identifying where practice could be improve.

INFORMATION GATHERING PROCESSES

The following sources were used to identify and confirm the proposed Equality Objectives:

- Recruitment and Selection data
- Staff and student profiles from 2012-2013
- Student surveys
- Staff forums and “think tanks”
- Curriculum team meetings
- Student conferences
- Student progression
- Work and study environment practices
- Learning support records
- ALS information
- Members of other decision making bodies (Senior Management Team, Governors, Community Teams, Care Services)
- Equality and Diversity Groups
- Student Union
- Unions

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Information has been gathered from National Organisations to support the College to ensure we are compliant with all of our statutory duties. These include:

- Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Federation of Racial Equality Council
- Stonewall
- Disability Rights Commission
- Mencap

- MIND
- Equal Opportunities Office
- Government Equalities Office
- Internal data re: application and enrolment data, student enrichment activities, course reviews.

IDENTIFIED EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2014-2017

Following a review of the information we have gathered regarding equality of opportunity for all stakeholders the College has identified the following key objectives.

Objective 1	To ensure all areas of the college are accessible to students and staff with identified and known disabilities.
Objective 2	To identify curriculum areas with a significant gender imbalance and to actively promote equality of opportunity for all in those areas.
Objective 3	To work with colleges, schools and the internet industry to address issues with cyber-bullying and help create a safer environment online.
Objective 4	Encourage greater voluntary disclosure of disability from staff.
Objective 5	To address the under representation in the current workforce diversity profile.

Revised January 14

Approved by SMT in February 14

THE LAW ON EQUAL TREATMENT

The Equality Act (2010) which is an Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom and is the overarching legislation which now provides the most recent guidelines on equality issues.

The primary purpose of the Act is to consolidate the complicated and numerous array of Acts and Regulations, which formed the basis of anti-discrimination law in Great Britain. This was, primarily, the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and three major statutory instruments protecting discrimination in employment on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age.

This legislation has the same goals as the four major EU Equal Treatment Directives, whose provisions it mirrors and implements. It requires equal treatment in access to employment as well as private and public services, regardless of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. In the case of gender, there are special protections for pregnant women. However the Act allows transsexual people to be barred from gender-specific services if that is "a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim".

In the case of disability, employers and service providers are under a duty to make reasonable adjustments to their workplaces to overcome barriers experienced by disabled people. In this regard, the Equality Act 2010 did not change the law.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY – RECRUITMENT AND CONDUCT OF STAFF

1 Recruitment

- 1.1 In seeking to achieve a balanced workforce at all levels, the College will ensure that all applications for vacancies or promotion will not be disadvantaged, or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the job advertised.
- 1.2 All staff and job applicants will be asked to complete a form denoting their sex, race, ethnic origin and any disabilities. The College guarantees that this form will only be used for the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of this policy.
- 1.3 All individuals will be selected and promoted on the basis of their relevant aptitudes, skills and abilities.
- 1.4 Reasonable adjustments will be made to arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for disabled staff or potential staff. The provision of an interpreter, scribe or facilitator will be considered if there are understanding or language difficulties. The College should be informed as soon as possible in advance of any such requirements.
- 1.5 All recruitment advertisements, external or internal, will include the College statement on Equal Opportunities, to inform potential candidates of our commitment to equal opportunities.
- 1.6 In order to ensure that all staff and recruitment candidates staff are treated with equality and fairness at all stages of the recruitment process and that decisions are based solely on objective and job related criteria, the College will ensure that equality issues are embedded into all its policies and procedures. For further detail please refer to the College's Recruitment and Selection Policy.

2 Staff Development

- 2.1 The College aims to ensure that all members of staff have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to be able to perform their duties effectively and to prepare for future strategic needs. Where possible the College will provide opportunities, facilities and financial help to staff requesting Staff Development. All staff must follow the procedure as outlined in the Staff Development Policy.
- 2.2 All requests for Staff Development will be fully considered and abide by this policy. Ultimately all decisions will take account of the College's Strategic Plan and Budget.

3 Requests for part-time employment/change of working pattern

3.1 The College recognises the value of a diverse workforce and where possible will support staff with the changing pattern of their work-life balance. All requests must be submitted to the Principal, stating clearly the reasons for the change and suggesting alternative arrangements. All requests will be considered fairly, consistently and in conjunction with this policy and where appropriate, the Flexible Working Policy. The following points will be taken into consideration when considering requests:

- The key functions of the post held by the member of staff must not be undermined by any changes
- Any possible detrimental effects upon the business of the College, the students or on other colleagues must be taken into account
- Any requests must be considered on an individual basis and any decision must not set a precedent for whole College practice
- If the College agrees to a permanent change from full-time to part-time status for any employee, it is under no obligation to reverse that decision at a later date.
- Job share will be fully considered for any request to work part-time.

4 Monitoring

4.1 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.

4.2 The College will use the two main forms of monitoring, i.e. the composition of the existing workforce and the recruitment process, looking at the workforce with reference to ethnicity, disability and gender in particular. To ensure this procedural document is consistent, applied co-ordinating responsibilities have been assigned to the Personnel Manager, who will carefully monitor its operation for both members of staff and job applicants. This monitoring will include an analysis of the ethnic and gender balance of the existing staff in order to identify any areas requiring improvement.

4.3 The College will also categorise members of staff 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, caring responsibilities. Records should also be kept of training, professional reviews, promotions and discretionary pay awards.

4.4 After the employment relationship has ended, the College may retain statistics, for example data about the compositions of the workforce, in accordance with the Data Protection Policy, for the purpose of carrying out our equal opportunities monitoring.

4.5 Monitoring will be undertaken in accordance with best practice recommendations, particularly from bodies such as the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and Disability Rights Commission (DRC). The Equality Act (2010) will provide further guidance.

5 Positive Action

- 5.1 St Vincent College undertakes to follow positive action measures allowed by law to rectify disadvantages in employment revealed by monitoring.
- 5.2 Positive action allows the College to:
- Provide facilities or services (in the form of training, education or welfare) to meet the individual 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.
- 5.3 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.

6 Complaints

- 6.1 If a member of staff believes they have not been treated fairly, due to prejudice, or discrimination within the scope of this procedure, they may raise the matter through the Complaints and Grievance Procedure. If the matter relates to sexual or racial harassment then the grievance may be raised using the Harassment at Work policy. Both documents may be obtained from the Personnel Department or are available on the Staff Intranet.
- 6.2 Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or breached this policy in any way will be subject to action under the College's Disciplinary Procedure, up to and including dismissal. The College Disciplinary procedure can be found on the intranet or from the Personnel Department.
- 6.3 If a job applicant wishes to complain about the College's recruitment and selection procedures in general or their application for a specific post, they should write to the Personnel Manager who will arrange for the matter to be investigated and for the complainant to receive a written response. If the complaint is against a member of the Personnel department, it will be dealt with by the Deputy Principal.
- 6.4 The governing Body and Senior Management Team of St Vincent College will also take seriously any malicious or, in its opinion unwarranted allegations of discrimination, and will take appropriate and swift action where necessary.

7 Review

- 7.1 This document will be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with legislation and the need for good practice i.e. at least every two years, using the local consultation arrangements within the College.