

**EQUALITY**  
**& DIVERSITY**

*A helpful guide to all things E&D, top tips and guides to best practice*

# Contents

Introduction for Staff.....	3
What is Equality and Diversity? .....	4
Checklist for Teaching and Learning.....	7
Top Tips to being a successful teacher .....	9
Things to think about to ensure equality in classroom practice.....	11
Celebrating Equality and Diversity .....	13

## **Equality and Diversity Statement**

“ St Vincent College prides itself on our commitment to equality and diversity as illustrated in all of our activities and services available to students, staff and other stakeholders who use our fantastic facilities.

We promote an inclusive culture where we provide fairness of opportunity whilst valuing and celebrating our differences, whether that be due to race, ethnic origin, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, economic or social background. ”



# Introduction for Staff

**Embedding Equality and Diversity into the curriculum, and in to our own thinking, is a challenging and exciting process. This guide is designed to help you learn and understand more about Equality and Diversity and the competencies needed to help it live within the teaching and learning experience of our students.**

All staff need to develop a range of skills and abilities to understand the needs of learners from diverse backgrounds. You will similarly need to translate these issues into how learners will deal with colleagues and customers in their future working lives. We also need to prepare our learners for living and working in a multi-cultural community.

Sharing ideas and practice is an integral part of the process, and discussing your ideas, approaches and issues with colleagues is probably the single most productive thing you can do. It will inspire confidence and share best practice. Staff development has a range of resources they can make available to you with additional guidance and support.

Evidence of inclusive curriculum planning and fairness of opportunity should be an integral part of your working day and highlighted during any inspection.

This booklet outlines some key aspects of our legal duties regarding Equality and Diversity under the Equality Act 2010 as well as providing guidance to help embed this into everyday practice.

Further information can be found in the following documents.

- The Equality Policy
- The Single Equality Scheme
- The Equality Statement of Compliance and Objectives



# What is Equality and Diversity?

It is key that all college practice demonstrates a thorough understanding of Equality and Diversity.

It is important to:

- Know the meaning of words and phrases under the headings of Equality and Diversity
- Develop a sound basis of understanding
- Explore some of the issues involved.

## **What is Equality?**

Everyone has equal human rights and therefore employment and services should be available to all. Everyone has individual needs and the right to have those needs respected. Equality is the framework for ensuring we provide **fairness of opportunity** by creating an environment where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

## **What role does Equality play in the college?**

Equality in the college means:

- Having trained staff and teachers who understand Equality issues (and proactively promote them in practice)
- Having staff (teachers and support) who support the College mission and values whilst proactively promoting them
- Having a staff team who reflect the population

It is important to note that Equality isn't about treating everyone the same!

## **What is Diversity?**

Diversity is about recognising and supporting individual and group differences. By treating people as individuals and placing positive value on differentiation in the college community we celebrate and respect our differences.

- Having support services available to staff to assist them when needed
- Having staff who provide services fairly and effectively (and proactively promote them)



**What barriers are faced by learners.**

The Equality Act 2010 identifies a range of protected characteristics which we have a duty to support. These include:

- age
- disability
- gender
- race/ethnicity
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- socio-economic status

Social problems can affect groups of people and when they are combined with personal problems additional support is very often needed.

Sometimes, issues of inequality occur because we attract such a range of learners from different parts of the local region with varying wants, needs, and abilities. Our curriculum offer is therefore designed to meet the changing needs of the groups so we provide a learning experience relevant to the needs of our community.

This should be a source of celebration. Studying with a wide range of people with different attitudes, beliefs, backgrounds, aptitudes and life experiences is an essential context for learning. Without this experience learners would not have what they need to survive in their social and working lives.



# Checklist for Teaching and Learning



Practice has shown that teachers who plan for the individual needs of their students based upon their initial and formative assessments have higher attendance, retention and ultimately success. By adopting differentiated teaching, learning and assessment activities which are reflected in structured Schemes of Work and Lesson Plans teachers can provide student centred lessons which help students to gain confidence, empower their own learning and enable them to achieve their full potential.

## **Quick Tips for Embedding E&D in to teaching, learning and assessment:**

1.	Use information available to you on Pilot/Egmont regarding each student's learning styles, support needs and GCSE average. This will help you to produce differentiated resources to meet their individual need
2.	When resources are produced, consideration is given to represent the diverse range of learners who access provision
3.	Use a variety of teaching and assessment methods which incorporate varying learning styles
4.	Language used by the tutor is non- discriminatory and appropriate
5.	Discussion and comments within the learning environment are managed to ensure learner language is appropriate and non-discriminatory with inappropriate comments or views openly challenged.
6.	Materials and topics are presented in a way that are sensitive to Equality and Diversity
7.	Resources are adapted to ensure that learners can access information and to meet individual needs (large print, on tape, using symbols)

8.	Learners have the opportunity to fully evaluate the course in an open and anonymous way
9.	Learn to recognise innovative opportunities to promote Equality and Diversity. For example approach scenarios from the perspective of different groups of people, consider current events, share students own experiences, adapt aspects of practical sessions to take in to account the challenges faced by others.
10.	Utilise Teaching Learning Communities (TLCs) and Course Team meetings to share ideas and good practice
11.	Undertake peer observations of colleagues in other curriculum areas. By seeing others in action you can reflect on how you can improve your own lessons for your students.



# Top Tips to being a successful teacher

There are hundreds of best practice guides and pieces of research concerning teaching practice and behaviours. These '6 keys' below are not necessarily definitive but as examples they do help remind us how a history of E&D issues (eg a poor home life) can show itself in learner behaviour and how E&D issues can become problems in the classroom if we are not careful.

## **1. Sense of humour.**

A sense of humour is a great asset in successful teaching. A sense of humour can relieve tense classroom situations before they become disruptions. A sense of humour will also make learning more enjoyable and possibly make students look forward to attending and paying attention. Most importantly, a sense of humour helps us manage our own emotions and keep a reasonable perspective during stressful situations.

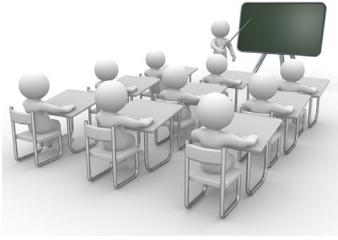
## **2. A Positive Attitude.**

A positive attitude is a great asset in facing many different professional challenges. A positive attitude can help cope with these in the best way.

## **3. High Expectations.**

An effective teacher must have high expectations and we should strive to raise the bar for our students. If we expect less effort we will receive less effort. We should work with an attitude that knows students can achieve to the College level of expectations, thereby giving them a sense of confidence too. This is not to say we should create unrealistic expectations. However, our expectations will be one of the key factors in helping students learn and achieve.





#### **4. Consistency.**

In order to create a positive learning environment our students should know what to expect from the College each day. We need to be consistent.

This will create a safe learning environment for the students and they will be more likely to succeed. It is amazing that students can adapt to different teachers throughout the day that range from strict to relaxed. However, they will dislike an environment in which the rules are constantly changing. Changing rules can include simple things such as inconsistent timescales for the return of marked work or the manner in which written or oral feedback is given.

#### **5. Fairness.**

Fairness and consistency are often confused. A consistent teacher is the same person from day to day. A fair teacher treats students equally in the same situation. For example, students complain of unfairness when teachers treat one gender or group of students differently.

It would be terribly unfair to go easier on the football players in a class than on the netball players. Students pick up on this quickly, so we must be careful of being labelled unfair.

#### **6. Flexibility.**

One of the tenets of teaching should be that everything is in a constant state of change.

Interruptions and disruptions are the norm and very few days are 'typical'. Therefore, a flexible attitude is important not only for stress levels but also for our students who expect us to be in charge and take control of any situation.

# Things to think about to ensure Equality in classroom practice



## **1. Planning**

- Do the course documents take into consideration the individual needs of the learner? (Initial Assessment, Scheme of Work, Lesson Plan, ILP)
- Is the learning environment conducive to learning? (layout, accessibility)
- Are there a variety of learning styles included in the teaching – auditory, visual and kinaesthetic? (Schemes of Work, lesson plans)

## **2. Delivery**

- Is time allocated during a learner's induction to the course for information and discussion on Equality and Diversity, including policies, etc? (Scheme of Work, Lesson Plans, ILP, complaints procedure)
- Setting appropriate ground rules with learners and maintaining high expectations
- Are appropriate assessment methods used for all learners? (Differentiation)
- Using appropriate and sensitive language and challenging inappropriate use of language

## **3. Diversity**

- Is Diversity included within teaching – making reference and using examples from a variety of cultures, religions, traditions, exploring stereotyping and other topics around Equality? (Lesson Plan, resources)
- How is prejudice and stereotyping challenged in the classroom?
- How do you build on learner Diversity as an educational resource?

#### 4. Resources

- Are teaching resources accessible for all learners?
- Do learners require additional resources to help them to access information? (Initial Assessment, ILP)
- Are people from diverse backgrounds, socio-economic, cultural, people with disabilities visible in course materials?
- Does the Learning Resource Centre hold a range of materials to support students studies?

#### 5. Additional Support

- Are learners given the opportunity to discuss additional support at the beginning and throughout the course?

***This document has been produced as a quick guide and is simply a reminder for staff of key aspects of Equality and Diversity. The full documents, policies, procedures and forms can be on the College intranet.***



# Celebrating Equality and Diversity

As a College we have actively developed the promotion of Equality and Diversity across the college.

Significant work has been undertaken this year with staff and students contributing to this by their participation and involvement in a range of activities which has included:

## **Celebrating Diversity Week**

The College has introduced an annual themed week in which we celebrate the differences amongst us all. This included focused work on International Woman's Day and supported work throughout the year that has been undertaken in tutorials.

## **Tutorials**

All students have had the opportunity to participate in a range of events and activities linked to Equality and Diversity. This has included group sessions regarding Black History Month and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Month. In addition to this students have accessed a range of progression themed events and access support from teaching and support staff regarding their own pastoral and academic support needs.

## **Equality and Diversity Committee**

The Committee was reformed in 2013/14 and has focused largely on staff training and awareness of Equality and Diversity issues for both staff and students. This booklet has been produced following recommendations from this group to support staff awareness of how to embed Equality and Diversity in to our everyday practice.



DIVERSITY

## **Teaching and Learning Communities (TLCs)**

Curriculum staff have been provided with a weekly staff development and team meeting slot in which they can share information, ideas and good practice regarding teaching, learning and assessment. This has included sessions focused on differentiation, developing Schemes of Work and assessment tools and has been supported by the introduction of How2s – an online resource bank available to all teaching staff.

## **Student Union and Staff Council**

Both staff and students have a forum whereby any matters they wish to raise with the College can be openly discussed in a supportive manner. Any concerns or celebrations regarding Equality and Diversity can be shared at these forums with relevant actions undertaken where necessary.



***More work will continue with regards to this in the coming year so watch this space!***





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