William College

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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1. Introduction

William College is committed to creating a workplace and learning environment where equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are integral to our culture and everyday practice. We oppose all forms of discrimination and victimisation, recognising the importance of valuing the diverse strengths, experiences, and perspectives of our community and ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

This policy ensures that every staff member and student is treated fairly, with dignity and respect, regardless of any protected characteristics (age, disability, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation).

William College fulfils its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to aligning with the principles of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which requires the College to have due regard to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Fostering good relations across all groups.

The College also complies with the specific duties to publish equality information annually and to set measurable equality objectives at least every four years.

1.1 Commitment to Tackling Antisemitism

William College recognises and adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, as recommended by the UK Government and the Department for Education.

The College opposes all forms of antisemitism, along with all other forms of racism, discrimination, and hate. Acts of antisemitism, whether verbal, written, physical, or online, will not be tolerated and will be addressed under the College's disciplinary and safeguarding procedures.

This commitment sits alongside Wiliam College's broader approach to addressing all forms of discrimination, harassment, and hate, ensuring a consistent and inclusive environment for all protected characteristics.

2. Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote equality, fairness, and inclusion across all areas of College life.
- Eliminate discrimination and bias based on protected characteristics.
- Support equitable access, participation, and outcomes for all members of the College community.
- Ensure access to learning, employment, and development opportunities for all.
- Encourage a culture of respect, dignity, and belonging.
- Support continuous improvement in policies, practices, and outcomes relating to equality and diversity.
- Ensure that EDI principles are integrated into curriculum design, teaching, and learning.
- Publish equality data and objectives to demonstrate transparency, accountability, and compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Embed inclusive practice in decision-making, governance, partnerships, and community engagement.

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3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students, staff, contractors, visitors, and partners.
- All College locations, programmes, digital platforms, and off-site activities.

It covers:

- Recruitment, admissions, and employment
- Curriculum, teaching, and learning
- Research and governance
- Staff and student development
- Engagement with the wider community
- Procurement, partnerships, and supplier relationships, where EDI standards are expected to be upheld.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Board of Governors

The Board of Governors hold ultimate responsibility for ensuring that William College implements the principles of EDI. They provide oversight of the College's EDI initiatives, scrutinise performance through regular reporting, review annual reports, and approve updates to the policy, ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. They also ensure that equality data and objectives are published and reviewed as part of the College's governance and risk management processes.

The Board ensures that EDI-related risks are identified, monitored and managed effectively as part of the College's Risk Register.

4.2 Senior Leadership and Management Team (SLMT)

The SLMT is responsible for the operational, day-to-day implementation of EDI principles across the College. This includes embedding inclusive practice into teaching, learning, curriculum delivery, and HR processes; allocating resources to support EDI initiatives; and monitoring day-to-day EDI performance, including staff and student outcomes. The SLMT works closely with the EDI Committee to address identified gaps and implement corrective actions at an operational level.

4.3 Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

The ELT holds strategic responsibility for EDI across the College, ensuring that EDI principles are reflected in organisational strategy, planning, and risk management. The ELT receives regular reports from the EDI Committee on performance against EDI objectives and reviews the Annual Equality Report before it is presented to the Board of Governors.

4.4 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee

The EDI Committee is responsible for leading the implementation of the College's EDI strategy. This includes monitoring progress and analysing data on staff and student demographics. It identifies trends, provides guidance, and supports inclusive practice. The Committee produces an Annual Equality Report, summarising progress, data insights, and priorities, which is reviewed by the Board of Governors and published on the College website.

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The EDI Committee reports operationally to the SLMT on day-to-day matters and strategically to the ELT, providing assurance on EDI performance and progress against objectives. The ELT, in turn, reports to the Board of Governors (or relevant sub-committee) on strategic EDI matters.

4.5 All Staff

All staff are expected to model inclusive behaviours, complete mandatory EDI training, and report incidents of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation. Staff are encouraged to contribute proactively to a culture that values diversity and promotes inclusion.

4.6 Human Resources (HR)

HR play a pivotal role in promoting William College's commitment to EDI. It embeds EDI principles in policies and practices, ensures fair and inclusive recruitment, delivers staff training, manages complaints with confidentiality, and monitors workforce diversity through data analysis to support planning and compliance.

4.7 Students

Students are expected to engage positively in College life, respecting the rights and dignity of others, and supporting initiatives that promote EDI. Students are encouraged to report barriers, discrimination, or harassment through appropriate channels to help maintain a safe and inclusive environment.

Students contribute to the development and review of EDI initiatives through feedback mechanisms and representation structures.

4.8 Third Parties (Visitors and Contractors)

William College expects all visitors, contractors, and external service providers to uphold its commitment to EDI. This includes complying with William College's EDI policies and regulations while on campus or working with the College, treating all members of the community with respect and fairness, ensuring that services and communications reflect inclusive practices, and cooperating with staff to address any EDI-related concerns or incidents.

5. Principles

William College is committed to fostering an environment in which EDI are fully embedded in all aspects of College life. Our approach is guided by the following principles:

- **Equality:** All individuals are treated fairly and equitably, with equal access to opportunities and resources across teaching, learning, employment, and engagement.
- **Equity:** Systemic barriers are identified and addressed to ensure that all members of the College community can achieve fair and just outcomes.
- **Diversity:** The College recognises, values, and celebrates the range of differences among individuals, including but not limited to cultural, social, and personal identities.
- **Inclusion:** Every individual is welcomed, supported, and enabled to participate fully in the life of the College, fostering a sense of belonging and engagement.
- **Intersectionality:** The College acknowledges that overlapping characteristics (e.g., race and gender, disability and socio-economic status) may create unique experiences of disadvantage and takes these into account in policy and practice.
- **Accessibility:** Learning environments, workplace facilities, and digital platforms are designed and maintained to be accessible to all, ensuring participation without disadvantage.

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- **Respect:** Interactions between all members of the College community are conducted with dignity, professionalism, and mutual understanding, promoting a culture of civility and positive engagement.
- **Wellbeing:** A respectful and inclusive environment supports the mental, emotional, and social wellbeing of all members of the College community.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** The College is open about its progress, publishes equality data, and acts on findings.
- **Collaboration:** The College works in partnership with students, staff, university partners and the local community to co-create inclusive initiatives.

6. Implementation and Monitoring

William College is committed to embedding EDI throughout all aspects of College life. To ensure that this commitment is effective, the College implements a range of measures to promote inclusive practice, monitor progress, and support continuous improvement.

6.1 Training and Awareness

All staff are required to complete mandatory induction and ongoing training on EDI, with completion monitored and reported. Students receive appropriate induction and awareness training. Targeted training is provided for managers, academic staff, and those in key positions to support inclusive practice and respond to incidents appropriately.

6.2 Reporting and Complaints

Clear mechanisms exist for reporting discrimination, harassment, bullying, or any other breaches of this policy. All reports are handled promptly, fairly, and confidentially through established grievance and complaints procedures. The College ensures that complainants are protected from retaliation. Please refer to the Staff Complaints Policy and Procedure and the Students Complaints Policy for further information.

6.3 Data Collection and Monitoring

The College collects and analyses demographic and outcome data for students and staff to identify trends, measure progress, and inform future initiatives. Where disparities or gaps are identified, the College develops targeted action plans and monitors progress against these. Key performance indicators include representation in leadership roles, student attainment and progression, staff and student satisfaction, and completion rates for EDI training. All monitoring complies with data protection legislation (GDPR). Particular focus is given to identifying and reducing gaps in outcomes between different student groups.

6.4 Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching

All programmes are designed and delivered to reflect diverse perspectives, learning styles, and inclusive teaching practices. The College continuously evaluates teaching and assessment methods to ensure equitable access and opportunity.

6.5 Stakeholder and Community Engagement

EDI principles extend to external partners, contractors, and suppliers, who are expected to uphold the College's standards, with appropriate monitoring and review mechanisms in place to ensure compliance. The College collaborates with community organisations and networks to promote inclusion beyond the institution.

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6.6 Student Voice

The College actively gathers and responds to student and staff feedback on EDI, through formal and informal mechanisms, including surveys and representation structures.

6.7 Accessibility

All physical, learning, and digital environments are maintained to ensure accessibility. Reasonable adjustments and assistive support are provided to enable full participation.

6.8 Continuous Improvement

Feedback from students, staff, and stakeholders is actively sought and used to refine practices, policies, and initiatives. Annual evaluation, informed by data and student and staff feedback, informs strategic planning, measurable EDI objectives and resource allocation.

7. Policy Review

This Policy is reviewed by the EDI committee annually, or earlier if there are changes in partners' policies or the regulatory framework. Any amendments require the approval of the Board of Governors.

8. Related Policies and Documents

- Staff Complaints and Grievances Policy and Procedures
- Student Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
- Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedure
- Admissions Policy
- Data Protection Policy

9. Appendix A: Definitions

These definitions are provided for guidance only and do not replace legal definitions set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Term	Definition
Antisemitism	Hostility to, prejudice or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic or racial group.
Diversity	The presence of differences within a given setting, including race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, etc.
Equality	The state of being equal in rights, status, and opportunities.
Equity	Ensuring fair treatment, opportunities, and outcomes by addressing systemic inequalities and barriers.

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Inclusion	The proactive, intentional practice of creating environments where all individuals feel welcomed and valued.
Intersectionality	The interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender, creating overlapping systems of discrimination.
Protected Characteristics	Attributes protected by law from discrimination, such as age, disability, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation
Reasonable Adjustment	Modifications or adaptations made to remove disadvantages faced by disabled people in the workplace or education.

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10. Appendix B: Protected Characteristics Definitions

These definitions have been taken from the Equality Act 2010:

Protected Characteristic	Definition
Age	Refers to a person belonging to a particular age group or being of a certain age. Discrimination based on age can include treating someone unfairly because they are older or younger.
Disability	A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
Gender Reassignment	When a person is undergoing, has undergone, or is proposing to undergo a process to change their sex, including medical or social transition.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Legal recognition of a union between two people. Protection applies to employees who are married or in a civil partnership.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Protection for women who are pregnant or who have recently given birth, including associated rights such as time off work.
Race	Includes colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins. Discrimination based on race covers unfair treatment related to any of these aspects.
Religion or Belief	Includes any religion, religious or philosophical belief, or lack of belief. Protection covers both direct discrimination and harassment related to beliefs.
Sex	Being male or female. Protection applies to unfair treatment, harassment, or victimisation because of a person's sex.
Sexual Orientation	A person's sexual orientation towards people of the same sex, opposite sex, or more than one sex. Discrimination includes unfair treatment or harassment based on sexual orientation.

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