



Working Together

Equalities Policy

Interim 1 year

May 2010



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**

Equalities Policy

Policy Statement

1. Introduction

Borders College fully supports the principle of equality and aims to offer a non-discriminatory environment for all involved in the College and its work.

The College opposes all unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability, age, or background e.g. criminal, trade union membership or any other unjustifiable grounds.

2. Scope

The Policy covers all people involved with Borders College, including –

- learners
- academic and support staff
- college managers
- members of the Board of Management
- employers, visitors to the College

An Equalities Committee oversees the operation of this policy, associated policies, schemes and action plans.

3. Key Principles

- Students and staff should benefit from college life and the College is committed to adopting flexible strategies and practices that cater for all and take into account individual circumstances and varying needs.
- The College is firmly committed to ensuring that all people have the same right to access learning.
- The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to avoiding unfair discrimination within our own recruitment practices.
- The College is committed to ensuring that any changes in the way it provides its service or its services are accessed do not negatively impact on any particular section of society.

Borders College has developed the following policies, schemes and procedures to put the principles into practice.

Race Equality

Borders College is committed to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups. It is unlawful to discriminate either directly or indirectly or to harass or victimise an individual on the grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin (Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003).

Gender

Borders College is committed to eliminating unlawful direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of gender, marital status, and gender reassignment and to opposing discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy. (Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005, Gender Recognition Act 2004).

Sexual Orientation

Those who are subjected to unlawful direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment because of their real or perceived sexual orientation may become unhappy, less productive and demotivated. Borders College will do all it can to promote good practice in this area, with a view to avoiding issues of discrimination arising. (The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003).

Religion or Belief

Borders College is committed to eliminating unlawful direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of an individual's real or perceived religion or belief. The College will do all it can to promote good practice in this area with a view to avoiding issues of discrimination arising (The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003).

Disability

Borders College aims to provide full and fair opportunity for employment for disabled applicants and to ensure, through training and practical assistance where required, their continued employment and promotion. Employees who become disabled will be accorded every possible opportunity for maintaining their position or for re-training if appropriate. (Disability Discrimination Act 1995 – DDA)

The College will also comply with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA), thus implementing part IV of the DDA which relates to students.

Age

Borders College opposes unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age and will ensure the principles incorporated within the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 are applied to all areas of employment of staff and to the area of vocational training for students.

Inclusiveness

Borders College will try to ensure that its educational provision responds, as far as possible, to the diverse needs of students from a wide range of circumstances including those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities, physical and mobility difficulties, rural isolation, social disabilities, sensory impairments and medical conditions.

Safeguarding of Juveniles and Adults at Risk of Harm

Borders College recognises its obligation to protect children, young people and adults at risk of harm from instances of physical, emotional, sexual or institutional harm whilst attending college. Students attending college have the right to expect protection from harm from any individual(s) connected with the College and its business. Staff are required to respond proactively and protectively to alleged or actual incidents of harm.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Borders College actively promotes equality of opportunity for all and welcomes applications both as an employer and as a provider of education from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We undertake to treat all applicants fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. Having a criminal record will not necessarily debar any individual from working or studying at Borders College. This will depend of the nature of the position, together with the circumstances and background of the offences.

Bullying and Harassment

Borders College recognises its responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment and upholds the right of employees and students to be treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and harassment is harmful, it causes distress and can lead to illness and poor performance. No form of bullying and harassment will be condoned at work, or outside of work if it has a bearing on the working relationship, and this will extend to staff, students and visitors to the College.

Where appropriate, every effort will be made to resolve the situation informally. Some incidents, however, by virtue of their serious nature, will need to be dealt with immediately under the formal procedures.

Policy Management

The College ensures that all its policies relating to services are equality impact assessed to ensure that they do not adversely discriminate against any particular section of society.

4. Responsibilities

The implementation of this policy is the duty of all managers. Employees also have a duty to uphold this policy. Those who do not may find themselves facing disciplinary action. Discrimination on the grounds of a person's age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientations or religion and belief is not tolerated by the College and is likely to be unlawful under the equalities legislation. Individuals should be aware that if they harass another person because of his or her age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientations or religion and belief they could be personally liable and may have to pay compensation themselves. This liability is separate from and in addition to any compensation that the College may be ordered to pay.

The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that the College complies with its legal obligations under the equalities legislation and other related laws and regulations.

The Senior Management Team is responsible for developing appropriate policies and procedures to ensure good practice in preventing discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientations or religion and belief.

The Vice Principal – Quality & Innovation is responsible for the implementation of this Policy.

Departmental managers are responsible for the application of this policy within their specified areas of responsibility.

It is the responsibility of all staff and students to report any incidents of discrimination, harassment or victimisations on the grounds of age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientations or religion and belief. Not to do so is to condone the behaviour and to be implicit in that discrimination. Such inaction could lead to disciplinary action being taken for the nondisclosure.

5. Related Documents

Internal

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Dismissal, Disciplinary and Grievance

Employee Resourcing Policy

Professional Conduct between Staff and Students

Staff Handbook

Student Discipline Policy

Race Equality Scheme 2010

Disability Equality Scheme 2010

Gender Equality Scheme 2010

Equality Action Plan and Self-evaluation

Policy on Sexual Orientation

Safeguarding Policy

Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders

Policy on Age

Policy on Religion and Belief

Policy Management Procedure

Full copies of all policies are available on the website
www.borderscollege.ac.uk or by application to the Publications
department.

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