

BORDERS



COLLEGE

Charity Number SC021180

'Borders – An Inclusive College'

A Guide to Inclusiveness at Borders College



www.borderscollege.ac.uk

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BORDERS



COLLEGE

Borders College
Scottish Borders Campus
Nether Road
GALASHIELS
TD1 3HE

Tel: 08700 50 51 52

Fax: 01896 758179

Email: enquiries@borderscollege.ac.uk

Welcome to Borders College

Borders College is committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. We promote an organisational culture which enables every student and every member of staff to feel respected and included, whatever their background, abilities, age, race, faith, sexuality or gender. We embrace the benefits and opportunities that come from having a diverse mix of staff and learners in the College environment. We aim to ensure that the College is an environment that is free from negative discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is enshrined within our mission and values. Our mission is to inspire growth, create opportunities and raise aspirations and included within our values is the commitment to put the learner at the heart of everything we do, act with mutual respect and value each and every individual.

This booklet incorporates a summary of the various College policies which support the above principles and values. All policies are available in full on the College website www.borderscollege.ac.uk or as paper copies from our Publications department.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Policy Statement

We oppose all unlawful or unfair forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or background e.g. criminal, trade union membership or any other unjustifiable grounds.

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
- contractors and sub-contractors

We recognise diversity in its broadest sense. Everyone is different so diversity includes us all not just those from minority groups.

We promote a culture of equality of opportunity, worth and process. We acknowledge that people often have different starting points and may face disadvantages and barriers. We will ensure that everyone has a fair chance to achieve their agreed goals and that we may take positive action or, where permissible, positively discriminate to help them achieve those goals.

Our 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 and diversity, avoiding unfair discrimination within our own recruitment practices for both employment and study.
- The College is committed to ensuring that any changes in the way it provides its service or how its services are accessed do not negatively impact on any particular section of society and will impact assess any change to ensure that this is achieved or minimised.

Inclusiveness

We will ensure that the College's educational provision responds, as far as possible, to the diverse needs of students from a wide range of circumstances including:

- different genders and sexual orientation
- different racial ethnic and religious backgrounds
- those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities, physical and mobility difficulties
- sensory impairments and medical conditions
- rural isolation
- different ages
- social disabilities

We will monitor our recruitment, our provision and the success of students of different ethnicity, gender, disability, age and background.

We are particularly concerned with ensuring that those groups within society who are more likely to experience discrimination and are protected by the Equality Act 2010 do not experience unfair discrimination, harassment or victimisation while working, studying or visiting at Borders College. The Act describes these as Protected Characteristics of which there are nine for employment and eight for the provision of services.

Protected Characteristics

Employment	Provision of Services
Disability	Disability
Sex (gender)	Sex (gender)
Gender reassignment	Gender reassignment
Marriage or civil partnership	Pregnancy and maternity
Pregnancy and maternity	Race
Race	Religion or belief
Religion or belief	Sexual orientation
Sexual orientation	Age (over 18s only)
Age	

We will protect individuals from different types of discrimination. These are defined as:

Direct Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably because they have a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by Association occurs when someone is treated less favourably because they associate with someone else who has a protected characteristic.

Perception Discrimination is a form of direct discrimination where someone is thought to have a protected characteristic. It applies even if the individual does not have that characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when the organisations rules, regulation practices or policies disadvantage a particular group or groups who have a protected characteristic. The College conducts equality impact assessments on new or revised strategies and policies to ensure that any change is considered and adjustments made to minimise the impact on any groups with protected characteristics. The College can justify indirect discrimination where it can show it has acted proportionately and reasonably in achieving a legitimate aim of its business.

We have zero-tolerance of any form of harassment and victimisation.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Harassment is in the perception of the individual, not the organisation. Even if the behaviour is not directed at them, whether they do or do not have the protected characteristic, if it is occurring within their environment they have the right to complain of harassment.

Third Party Harassment occurs where an individual from out with the College is harassing either an employee or a student.

We recognise our responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment and uphold the right of employees and students to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment is harmful, causes distress and can lead to illness and poor performance. No form of harassment will be condoned at the College whether it be between staff, students or visitors.

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.

Victimisation occurs when an employee or student is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint of discrimination or harassment.

We will ensure that staff and students can complain or bring to our attention any concern about discrimination or harassment without fear of victimisation.

We will investigate any claims of victimisation and make every effort to resolve the issue informally unless the seriousness of the incident is such that formal proceedings are required.

A full copy of Borders College Policy on Bullying and Harassment is available on the website www.borderscollege.ac.uk or by application to the Publications department.

Other Associated Policies

Borders College has also developed the following policies to support our equality and diversity principles, to promote rights and protect vulnerable people.

Complaints

Where an individual or group wishes to make a complaint that we have not complied with our service standards we will encourage them to make a complaint following our complaints procedure. A guide to making a complaint is available on our website along with a copy of our Complaints Policy and Handling Procedure

Safeguarding of Juveniles and Adults at Risk of Harm

We recognise our 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.

A full copy of Borders College Policy on the Protection of Juveniles and Adults at Risk is available on the website **www.borderscollege.ac.uk** or by application to the Publications department.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all and welcome applications, both as an employer and as a provider of education, from a wide range of candidates including those with criminal convictions. 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.

A full copy of Borders College Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders is available on the website **www.borderscollege.ac.uk** or by application to the Publications department.

Gender-Based Abuse

The College has policies for gender-based abuse for both staff and students.

We are committed to developing a culture in which there is zero tolerance for abuse and which recognises that the responsibility for gender-based abuse lies with the perpetrator. The College has a 'zero tolerance' position on gender-based abuse and is committed to ensuring that any student or member of staff who is the victim of gender-based abuse has the right to raise the issue with any member of staff or colleague in the knowledge that they will receive appropriate support and assistance.

This policy also covers the approach we will take where there are concerns that a student or member of staff may be the perpetrator of gender-based abuse.

Full copies of Borders College policies on gender-based and domestic abuse are available on the website www.borderscollege.ac.uk or by application to the Publications department.



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A Summary of Borders College Policies on:

- ◆ **Equal Opportunities**
- ◆ **Safeguarding Juveniles and Adults at Risk of Harm**
- ◆ **Recruitment of Ex-Offenders**
- ◆ **Complaints Handling**
- ◆ **Bullying and Harassment**
- ◆ **Domestic Abuse (Staff)**
- ◆ **Gender-based Abuse (Students)**

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