



Single Equality Scheme
(2023-2025)

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Introduction from the Executive

Welcome to The City of Liverpool College's Single Equality Statement 2023-2025. At The City of Liverpool College (CoLC), equality, diversity and inclusion form part of everything we do – for our students, for our staff and for our partners across the City Region. We're committed to ensuring that CoLC isn't just a place to learn or work, but to belong – a place where everyone in our college community can thrive and grow to meet their full potential.

As the largest FE college within the Liverpool City Region, we act as an anchor institution for the city and beyond, serving a diverse population from a wide range of backgrounds, including some of the most disadvantaged. Our work focuses on turning that disadvantage to advantage and supporting every learner to succeed, enabled and supported by highly skilled staff who have equally diverse backgrounds and lived experiences.

This Single Equality Scheme outlines the College's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, setting out a framework which outlines where we are, our direction of travel, key aims and objectives, how we are meeting specific responsibilities and commitments, and the roles of our CoLC community in achieving these. We know that different groups require different approaches and that individuals have individual needs; this Single Equality Scheme does not aim to be all things to all people, but it will also give you a flavour of some of our thematic work and how we're building on this to move forwards.

Most importantly, it sets out our promise to you, as a member of the CoLC community: that we continue to listen, learn and grow alongside our students, our staff and stakeholders across our City Region, and that The City of Liverpool College is a place where you can belong and find the support you need to succeed.

Elaine Bowker, Principal & Chief Executive

The Single Equality Scheme: purpose & objectives

The City of Liverpool College is committed to providing an inclusive environment for all our employees, students, and external stakeholders. This involves promoting, maintaining, and supporting equality and diversity in all aspects of our work. Our Single Equality Scheme sets out how The City of Liverpool College is meeting its legal obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty¹. It describes key frameworks within the College, our approach to different needs and the wider context in which we operate, along with key roles and responsibilities relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

The Single Equality Scheme builds on research/consultation conducted within the college, learning from data analysis, good practice elsewhere in the sector and beyond as well as progress to date on EDI considerations within the College – how our college has worked with and listened to students, staff, partners and other members of our wider college community to inform development of our equality objectives and supporting action plans. It sits directly beneath our strategic plan and is embedded in the delivery of each of our strategic goals².

The aim of this Single Equality Scheme is twofold:

- To **remove or minimise disadvantage** by further developing measures and actions that pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote EDI for all those who share any of the protected characteristics.
- To take steps to **meet different needs** by promoting EDI so that our approach goes beyond compliance with legislation and remains embedded in our ethos and culture, recognising our role as an anchor institution within the Liverpool City Region.

We will work towards achieving this by:

- ensuring potential and current staff, learners, visitors do not experience discrimination;
- encouraging participation from different groups in all aspects of our work where it is disproportionately low;
- creating a positive and inclusive environment for all, where everyone feels valued and respected;
- raising awareness with regards to discrimination and ensure that all staff, students, stakeholders and service users are aware of their responsibilities under the current equality legislation and our own internal policies and cross-college strategies; and,

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/2260/contents/made>

² Our mission, values & strategic aims (pg 7)

- continuously seeking ways in which we can support the recruitment, retention, achievement and progression and personal and professional development of all our staff and learners.

The City of Liverpool College is working towards the following high level equality objectives over the lifetime of this Single Equality Scheme (2023-25):

1. **Objective 1:** Continuing to develop our curriculum to respond to the needs of students and our wider CoLC community, considering content, structure and access to provision.
2. **Objective 2:** Delivering against targets within curriculum areas and business support which are designed to promote equality and diversity.
3. **Objective 3:** Community development which reaches out to people and breaks down perceived barriers.
4. **Objective 4:** Increasing disclosure rates of protected characteristics to deliver insight and targeted interventions to promote and drive equality forwards.
5. **Objective 5:** Delivering a rolling programme of professional development which continues to support staff to promote, maintain and embed equality, diversity and inclusion into our daily practice.
6. **Objective 6:** Continuing to innovate our recruitment practices to more closely reflect the demographics of the communities we serve.

These overarching objectives are supported by specific underpinning actions and will be monitored on an ongoing basis, with progress recorded in our annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusion report. As per the lifetime of this Single Equality Scheme, these objectives cover the period from September 2023 to August 2025. The supporting actions are subject to ongoing review through the College's internal governance arrangements and the strategic direction of the EDI Strategy Group and the Strategic Leadership Team.³

³ Governance and reporting arrangements (pg20)

A note on terminology

We recognise that individuals will have different preferences regarding how they refer to themselves and particularly as members of minoritised groups. In addition, the use of ‘umbrella’ terms to refer to groups can have the effect of reducing our understanding of people’s lived experiences and where specific challenges exist – for example, reviewing the recruitment of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people against the local population as a group may obscure under-representation of individual minorities *within* that group.

For the purpose of this document, which exists in the context of particular legal frameworks, we largely use the terminology used within these frameworks to refer to groups with protected characteristics⁴. In practice, we recognise the value of more fine-grained analysis and metrics, which are used to underpin and inform our specific cross-college strategies and are embedding this as a key part of our approach to supporting different groups to thrive at college. In addition, we will continue to work with representative groups across the College to reflect the needs and general preferences of groups of staff and students insofar as possible in our work.

A glossary of terms is provided at Appendix A for any terminology which may be unfamiliar to the reader.

⁴ The Legal Frameworks (pg11)

Our mission, values and strategic aims

The College's mission is to provide high quality skills and education by delivering the biggest opportunities for growth for all the people and businesses of the Liverpool City Region. We do this with positive attention to our college values: **diversity, quality, inspiration, ambition, partnership** and **innovation**.

Our strategic plan (2021-2025) translates this into three strategic goals and two strategic enablers:

Our Strategic Goals

- **World-class skills for business** – operating as “the college for business”, with a focus on current need and industry innovations and supporting the post-pandemic recovery and economic growth across the city region.
- **Delivering an outstanding student experience** – tailoring our approach to the needs of our learners, our city and our communities as part of a dynamic partnership with all three.
- **Developing talent for sustainable employment** – upskilling, reskilling and generating the talent of the future through a focus on careers, not courses.

Our Strategic Enablers

- **Turning disadvantage into advantage** – *recognising* our student cohort and delivering an experience tailored to their needs, taking a student-centred approach ('the whole student').
- **Systems thinking by critical thinkers** – changing the *culture* across the College from top to bottom to realise an impact that goes beyond individual actions ('the whole college') as a crucial part of the city region's education and skills system.

Our Single Equality Scheme should be read in the context of these goals and enablers, with each commitment within this document linking back to our strategic plan and the promises it contains. Our work in this area touches upon every part of the College, from the classroom to the workshop to the people who come together to deliver an outstanding student experience for our learners.

Our full strategic plan can be found here: <https://www.liv-coll.ac.uk/the-college/the-strategic-plan/>

Context: A sense of place

Liverpool is a proud city with a rich history and many diverse communities, including one of Europe's oldest Black communities. It is also a city that's characterised by marked disadvantage: according to the 2019 IMD (pre-pandemic), 48% of the city's residents lived in the most deprived 10% of areas nationally, including 57% of its children; Liverpool itself is one of the most deprived local authorities in England (third of 317); the Liverpool City Region remains the most deprived of England's 38 LEP areas. Within the City Region, the pandemic has exposed and exacerbated existing inequalities in respect of gender, race, socio-economic background, disability, learning difficulties and more. We know, too, that digital exclusion is increasingly a barrier to many, and that this disproportionately impacts on students from more deprived socio-economic backgrounds and communities of colour.

In addition:

- The latest census data identifies that Liverpool has seen population growth across all ethnic groups with the exception of White English/British (-5%) and the 'Any Other' category (-7%) between 2011 and 2021 (ONS data). 16% of Liverpool residents were recorded as of a minority ethnic background in total.
- Liverpool's working age population are more likely to be economically inactive due to long-term sickness, caring responsibilities or because they are 'discouraged' workers (NOMIS, Annual Population Survey 19/20).
- 22.8% of the population of the Liverpool City Region have a disability, higher than the national average of 17.8%; in recent surveys, 7.6% of LCR residents reported having bad or very bad health, significantly higher than the regional and national averages of 6.2% and 5.2% respectively. It is also the highest rate of all English MCAs. All six LCR local authorities have higher rates of residents with poor health than average, with the highest rates in Knowsley (8.6%) and Liverpool (8%). The employment rate for disabled people within the LCR is now 52% in comparison to 73.7% for the general population.
- The 2021 census recorded 262,000 people (0.5% of the population aged 16 years and over) reported that their gender identity was different to their sex registered at birth; this figure rises to 0.7% within the Local Authority district of Liverpool and dropping to 0.3-0.4% within the other local authorities within the city region. NB the ONS reports that the transgender population is not spread equally across all groups of the population, with 1% of people aged 16-24 years recording that they were trans compared with 0.54% of the population as a whole.
- 51.3% of Liverpool residents are recorded as female in the latest census data (ONS, 2021)

College profile: our student cohort

Our student cohort is dominated by students recruited from Liverpool and the surrounding areas. Over the 2022/23 academic year, the College enrolled 11,224 students. Of these:

- 5,551 were female (49.5%) and 5,671 male (50.5%)⁵.
- 4,792 students identified as from an ethnic minority background (42.6%), similar to the previous year; 318 (2.8%) preferred not to say.
- 6,001 students were from the top band of postcode deprivation (53.5%), rising to 7,444 in the top two bands (66.3%) and 8,257 in the top three bands (73.6%) according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. By this measure, our student cohort is significantly more disadvantaged than the sector as a whole.
- 390 students identified as young carers; 361 as care experienced (nearly double the rate recorded within the local authority in 2022 (172/10,000) and over four times the national rate).
- 2,507 students identified themselves as having a learning difficulty or disability (22.3%); 211 of these were in receipt of an EHCP (1.9%).
- Significant increases in the volume of students in receipt of Free School Meals in comparison to the previous year.

In addition to all of the above, we know that our students are still experiencing the impact of the pandemic years, both in terms of lost learning before joining the College, and in terms of the impact on their mental health and wellbeing, physical health, and economic security, with the Liverpool City Region and the North West disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and response.

Our approach to supporting our students to succeed is a direct response to what we know of our cohort and the impact of lived experiences, rooted in research-informed approaches to pedagogy and support, including our social and cultural curriculum, the Liverpool Way (our cross-college approach to teaching, learning and assessment) and CoLC as a trauma-informed organisation.

⁵ This indicator refers to sex rather than gender identity, which the College does not yet collect across the student cohort. Consideration is being given to how the College enhances its data collection to recognise and support a more gender diverse cohort.

These approaches are reflected in the positive outcomes for our students; a high proportion of our students take their next step directly into further education, training or employment; our student outcomes place us in the top quintile of all further education colleges.

College profile: our workforce

The College's workforce is primarily drawn from the Liverpool City Region (approximately 55% directly from the city of Liverpool itself) and at a top-level has largely reflected the ethnic demography of the city region in recent years, with approximately 10% of staff identifying as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic groups. The College's EDI Strategy Group have identified that this is true at a whole college level but not across a subset of management roles or with regards to individual ethnic minority groups and positive actions to address this form part of our cross-college anti-racism action plan.

As at May 2023, 39.1% of staff identified themselves as male and 60.9% as female. 9% of all staff classified themselves as having a disability. 4.82% of all staff identified as a sexual orientation within the LGBT+, but this may be skewed by low disclosure rates with almost 25% of staff preferring not to say. Similarly, only 73% of staff declared their religion. Over 50% of college staff are aged 50 years old or over and this includes a large volume of staff who fall within the average 'window' for the menopause.

At The City of Liverpool College, we recognise that our college is the result of everything our staff bring to the table – not just their skill and enthusiasm but also their own lived experiences and diverse backgrounds. Consequently, the College is actively reviewing how it collects workforce data with a view to provide greater insight, recognising and better supporting the diversity of its staff cohort through increased disclosure rates and ongoing reporting as one of our equality objectives over the lifetime of this scheme.

In addition to all of the above, we know that our staff are also still experiencing the impact of the pandemic years, both in terms of the impact on their mental health, wellbeing, and physical health, and also in terms of the changed educational landscape. Our work around staff wellbeing and wider EDI considerations also reflects this in terms of investments in support for staff wellbeing and inclusion within cross-college thematic EDI action plans.

The Legal Frameworks

The City of Liverpool College is a public sector organisation, meaning it must respond to the Public Sector Equality duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010). The College must meet this duty both as an employer and as a provider of further and higher education and show due regard to the duty across all of our functions.

The general equality duty requires the College to show due regard to:

1. Eliminating and preventing discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act (2010).
2. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who do and do not share a protected characteristic(s).
3. Fostering good relations between people who identify with a protected characteristic(s) and those who do not.

The duty covers nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

Public bodies are also required to comply with two specific duties to:

- Publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating compliance with the equality duty; and,
- Set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives.

The College will continue to publish information demonstrating compliance with the general duty on an annual basis, in March/April of each year.

We also consider as part of our work how to meet the duties and obligations within the following:

- The Children and Families Act (2014) provides the statutory basis for the system for identifying children and young people (0-25) in England with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities, assessing their needs and ensuring equality of access and provision for them.

- The Human Rights Act (2000) obliges public authorities to treat people in accordance with their rights under the European Convention of Human Rights. The College's anti-slavery statement⁶ can be found on its website and sets out College actions to understand all potential modern slavery risks related to our business, and the steps we have put in place that are aimed at ensuring that there is no slavery or human trafficking in our business and supply chains.
- The requirement within the Equality Act (2010) for all employers with over 250 employees to report and publish their gender pay gap information on an annual basis⁷.

⁶ https://www.liv-coll.ac.uk/policy_documents/modern-slavery-statement/

⁷ Governance & Reporting (pg 21)

Our commitments

The City of Liverpool College is committed to ensuring an environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation. Our students, our staff, our partners and any visitors to the College should feel valued and respected at all times within a diverse and inclusive environment.

We recognise that the diversity of our students and staff is a strength of the College: our students are encouraged to recognise themselves as global citizens with a wealth of diverse experiences to draw on and learn from across the student and staff bodies. This involves promoting, embedding and actively maintaining equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work to better reflect and support our CoLC community. This responsibility is threefold:

- as an educational provider;
- as a good employer; and,
- as an anchor institution within the Liverpool City Region, with influence over key external stakeholders.

The College does not operate in a vacuum. In addition to the personal characteristics that are protected under law, The City of Liverpool College recognises that other aspects of background and life circumstances also affect individuals' ability to thrive, access opportunities and succeed in learning and in work. Where possible, we will take account the impact of other considerations such cultural and socio-economic background, prior access to education, and physical and mental health considerations beyond those specified in legislation as part of our commitment to turning disadvantage to advantage.

In addition to our overarching response to equalities considerations, the EDI Strategy Group is focusing its work for 2023-25 around five key thematic workstreams, each with specific underpinning actions:

- **Anti-racism:** in response to the changing demographics across the city region; the nature of our student cohort; under-representation of staff at different levels of the organisation; the history of Liverpool and our strong sense of place; our commitment to recognising our students as global citizens under a wealth model of social and cultural capital; and the intersections between ethnicity and other forms of disadvantage which were made explicit during the pandemic years. We acknowledge that structural and systemic racism exists across society within the United Kingdom and that the manifestation of this has a direct impact on our learners, our staff and our wider college community. Included within this is a recognition of both antisemitism and islamophobia as forms of racism, with the College adopting the

IHRA working definition of antisemitism⁸ and the working definition of islamophobia as proposed by the APPG on British Muslim life in 2019⁹.

- **LGBTQ+ with a particular focus on gender diversity:** in response to the changing demographics (and/or increased disclosure rates) of our student cohort; a reported increase in homophobic and transphobic hate crime within the communities served by the College; and in recognition of the level of vitriol which now surrounds the public 'debate' around the human rights of transgender and non-binary or gender fluid individuals. We acknowledge that gender diversity goes beyond what is reflected under equalities legislation in line with best practice (e.g., the protected characteristic of gender re-assignment vs a more holistic understanding of transgender, non-binary and gender fluid identities) and our approach is more encompassing of this diversity.
- **Physical health (disability, chronic health conditions and menopause):** in response to the short, medium and longer term impacts of the pandemic on physical health; the continued need to be mindful of accessibility as we remodel aspects of our estate; links to employment rates within the Liverpool City Region; and the demographic analysis of our workforce, which includes a significant volume of staff within the age and sex category most likely to experience / be about to experience menopause. We also recognise the additional impact of the current challenges faced by the healthcare system which may provide additional challenges to our students and staff.
- **Neurodiversity:** in response to growing and disproportionate volumes of neurodiverse students attending college compared to regional figures; insight gained from other key stakeholders within the Liverpool City Region educational ecosystem; under-employment rates across the City Region; the direct relationship to teaching, learning and assessment; and increases in recognition and disclosure rates within the general populace and our own workforce as we continue to improve awareness and inclusion. We also recognise the additional impact of the current challenges faced by the healthcare system which may provide additional challenges to our students and staff.
- **Mental health:** in response to the short, medium and longer term impacts of the pandemic on mental health; growing numbers of students and staff reporting mental health challenges; links to employment rates within the Liverpool City Region; the cross-cutting and interdependent nature of mental health with other considerations identified as thematic priorities; and the additional impact of the current challenges faced by the healthcare system which are impacting on students and staff ability to

⁸ <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>

⁹ <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-09-09/debates/B2667B41-FDA9-4BFD-BCD3-AFD4AF5165FD/DefinitionOfIslamophobia>

access support. The City of Liverpool College is working to become a trauma-informed organisation in terms of pedagogy as well as direct support, recognising the impact of adverse childhood experiences and the prevalence of these across our student cohort.

Our thematic priorities are supported by cohort analysis and insight provided across a range of means including the student and staff voice. We are also committed to recognising in our work that disadvantage can be intersectional, and the different ways in which that can manifest and be challenged.

How we are meeting our duties

We are continuously working to promote and embed equality, diversity and inclusion at every level of the College and in every aspect of our work, with the College Board and Strategic Leadership Team taking an active role.

This is underpinned by:

1. Publication and communication of the key messages from this Single Equality Scheme for the benefit of learners, staff, governors, partners and other key stakeholders of the College.
2. Ensuring that all parties understand their rights, responsibilities and accountabilities under this scheme through inductions, tutorials, online programmes and regular staff development updates to reinforce the key messages.
3. Embedding fully into the curriculum inclusive education practices, monitored via our quality assurance cycle (e.g., teaching and learning observations, self-assessment reports and feedback from students, staff and partners); the same practices will be applied to our CPD for staff.
4. A range of activities designed to raise awareness, promote and reinforce and environment that centres equality, diversity and inclusion, including direct involvement of students and staff in EDI activities and training and indirect activity such as communicating key messages via the CoLC environment (use of posters, VLE, website and social media channels etc).
5. Risk assessing and regularly reviewing policies and strategies in the context of protected characteristics and our commitment to going beyond our legal obligations to deliver an outstanding student experience and act as a good employer.
6. Encouraging and supporting the development of innovative projects that recognise the unique nature of our student cohort and working to remove individual and systemic barriers to success.
7. Establishing and supporting cross-college working groups to explore the lived experience, challenges and successes of individuals across the CoLC community, focused on the thematic workstreams identified as priorities by the EDI Strategy Group.
8. Having in place clear and effective complaints and disciplinary procedures for dealing with direct and indirect discrimination.
9. Monitoring, reviewing and reporting on the effectiveness of these procedures to SLT, WLT and Governors, supported by a robust approach to data collection and

analysis which includes mechanisms to consider the lived experience of different groups – not just the numbers.

10. Ensuring that the College's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
11. Having recruitment and promotion procedures which are designed and implemented to eliminate unlawful discrimination (e.g., implementing blind shortlisting processes for candidates) and exploring avenues where positive action can apply to address under-representation for groups within the CoLC workforce.
12. Tailoring our approach to the needs of our cohort and the needs of our students as individuals, recognising that different groups of learners benefit from different pedagogical and support strategies.
13. Working with other anchor institutions and key partners to contribute to an impact that's greater than the sum of our parts, through local and national initiatives that work to overcome and dismantle systemic barriers to success and progression for our marginalised communities.
14. Developing our most valuable resource – people – to question with compassion the practices we employ, the student experience and the means by which we educate our learners; to role model the behaviour and mindset of an organisation committed to continuously evaluating our own work through an EDI lens.
15. Publishing relevant, proportionate information demonstrating compliance with the equality duty.
16. Ensuring our governance, leadership and every day practice is informed by a wide and diverse range of people and becomes increasingly reflective of the communities that we strive to serve.

Other policies

In addition to the Single Equality Scheme, we have a number of policies and processes that in which our commitments around equality, diversity and inclusion are communicated and translated into practice.

Student Policies	Policies for Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition Fee Policy 2022/23 • Safeguarding: Child Protection Policy • Safeguarding: Adults at Risk Protection Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption Leave Policy • Annual Leave Management Policy • Appraisals Policy 2022-23 (Including Appraisal Moderation Process 2022-23)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Conduct Policy • Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence Policy • Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy • Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement • Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure • Data Protection and Freedom of Information • Admissions Policy (HE) • Access and Participation Plan (HE) • Complaints Policy (HE) • Public Information Policy and Procedure (HE) • Student Charter (HE) • Recognition of Prior Learning (HE) • Academic Appeals Policy (HE) • Assessments, Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances (HE) • HE Policy on Assessment 2022-2023 (HE) • HE Attendance and At Risk Policy 2021-22 (HE) • He Policy on Late Submission of Assessment 2022-23 (HE) • HE External Expertise Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Management Policy • Bullying & Harassment Policy and Procedure • Career Break Policy • Code of Conduct • Compassionate and Bereavement Leave • Data Protection Policy • Dependants' Leave Policy • Disciplinary Policy and Procedure • Domestic Abuse Policy • Employment References Policy • Family Friendly Policy • Fertility Leave Policy • Flexible Retirement Policy • Flexible Working Policy • Grievance Policy • Home Working Policy • Job Share Policy • Maternity Leave Policy • Parental Leave Policy • Paternity Leave • Recruitment and Selection Policy (including Probationary Procedure) • Redundancy Policy • Senior Postholders Disciplinary policy • Senior Postholder Grievance Policy • Shared Parental Leave • Stress Policy • Volunteers Policy and Agreement • Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure • Capability Management Procedure • Mandatory Compliance Training Procedure • Menopause Guidance • Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement • Safeguarding Procedures for Non-employees • Use of College Premises
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How we work with our stakeholders

We recognise the value of staff, students and our wider CoLC community in supporting the development of equality, diversity and inclusion strategies which meet their needs. Key messages are shared cross-college via managers and team briefings, termly Executive briefing sessions with all staff and through our One College, One Mindset internal weekly bulletin. We also share data and bite-sized learning through the College's EDI intranet page on an ongoing basis, together with regular CPD for staff on related topics as part of our rolling CPD programme and staff development days.

The College has worked with staff groups to establish staff networks within the College, with individuals encouraged and supported to attend. (At the time of publication, these were: the BAME staff network, the LGBT+ staff network, and the Disability and Chronic Health Inclusion staff network.) The Chairs of these networks are active participants of the EDI Strategy Group and have a standing item to provide feedback to the EDISG, as well as regular meetings with the Director of Diversity & Inclusion and the Strategic Director (Development & Operations). Cross-college working groups which involve a diverse cross-section of staff (by function; by level in the organisation) support the formulation of cross-college action plans against each of the thematic priorities agreed by the EDISG.

The student voice is captured through a variety of mechanisms, including our Student Union and student parliament. Our SU President is a governor on the Corporation Board and supported to actively engage in the governance of the College; the Director of Diversity & Inclusion meets with the SU Executive on an ongoing basis to ensure a direct line of communication.

More widely, the Pedagogy & Insight team supports a window into the student experience and proactively seeks the views of students on equality-related issues on an ongoing basis to ensure that we are focusing on issues and developments that are relevant and of benefit to the students. We also monitor data collected on student performance and wellbeing by our teachers and progress leaders to identify any areas for intervention and additional support. Feedback from participants in equality, diversity and inclusion related events engaged with through the PDP curriculum is also considered.

We recognise the value in learning from others across the sector and outside it: the College is well networked with partners such as the Black FE Leadership Group, the Navajo Partnership, the Liverpool City Region's Race Equality Hub and others, and is working to strengthen its links with community partners to inform our practice.

This Single Equality Scheme will be shared with key stakeholders across our staff networks and the Student Union for comment and feedback.

Governance and reporting

Overall responsibility for the character of The City of Liverpool College rests with the Corporation Board, who operate a scheme of delegation to support the achievement of the College's strategic aims.

Within the College, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group (EDISG) is chaired by The City of Liverpool College's Principal and meets twice a term to consider and evaluate the effective promotion of EDI across all college sites and in all college functions by:

- Providing a forum for discussion of equality, diversity and inclusion issues.
- Actively promoting and monitoring the progress of equality, diversity and inclusive learning across the College.
- Monitoring equal opportunities in the College as outlined in the Single Equality Scheme and reporting to the Strategic Leadership Team.
- Reviewing and interrogating changes in policies, procedures and practice through an EDI lens, with recommendations made to the Strategic Leadership Team.
- Developing links with appropriate external agencies and community groups that will support further development and embedding of our EDI work.

We will publish information from our EDISG on the CoLC EDI work internally and via our website to demonstrate how we are complying with the equality duty and one or more specific and measurable equality objectives annually. The Corporation Board also receive regular reporting through an EDI lens in line with governance arrangements and responsibilities around student performance, compliance with legal obligations and our commitment as set out within the strategic plan for a genuinely diverse and inclusive culture.

Performance reporting

We regularly review key sources of data within the College to identify areas for improvement and good practice. The College's annual Self-Assessment Report looks at student performance through a variety of lenses, including equality, diversity and inclusion; key student metrics around access, participation and progress will be reviewed over the lifetime of this scheme and reported on via the EDISG and the SLT, including but not limited to:

- End-to-end student recruitment and enrolment on programmes (by level, sector etc and including regular review of entry criteria)
- Attendance and exclusion rates
- Retention rates
- Pass rates
- Achievement rates

- Student satisfaction
- Progression rates
- Disciplinary action
- Complaints by learners

The EDISG will also monitor data on staff ethnicity, gender, disability including learning difficulties and age:

- By profiling by grade and type of work
- The end-to-end staff recruitment process (including regular review of selection criteria)
- Retention and progression of staff
- By type of contract of employment
- For staff development applications
- Disciplinary action
- Performance or absence management procedures
- Grievances

We know that the robustness of our data is (in some cases) dependent on self-disclosure by our staff and students, and are working with our stakeholders to explore ways of strengthening disclosure rates of particular protected characteristics to promote and drive equality forward.

In addition to the above, The City of Liverpool College is also committed to understanding the lived experience of different cohorts within the College and will continue to commission research into our staff and students' experiences, using the insight gathered to further develop and progress our EDI strategies.

Pay gap reporting

We also publish information annually on gender and pay, which is required by legislation, and on race and pay, which is not required by legislation, as part of our commitment to becoming an anti-racist organisation. Pay gap reports can be found on the College's website here: <https://www.liv-coll.ac.uk/the-college/corporate-reports/>.

Equality impact assessments

It is important to know whether our services are meeting everyone's needs, and that people who need our services have access to them. As part of this, all policies within the College will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

An Equality Impact Assessment is a way of deciding whether an existing or proposed policy, procedure, practice or service may affect people differently and, if so, whether it affects them in an adverse way. The College is introducing a rolling programme of carrying out Equality Impact Assessments on its policies and services. Assessments are carried out on new policies

and services as they are developed and updated by the policy 'owner', with additional support available from the Director of Diversity & Inclusion. Training and support will be provided to people who are responsible for undertaking Equality Impact Assessments.

A summary and analysis of the results of the Equality Impact Assessments will be reported to EDISG as part of the annual review of EDI at The City of Liverpool College.

Roles and responsibilities

At The City of Liverpool College, we believe that equality, diversity and inclusion is everyone's responsibility – staff, students, partners, visitors and our wider CoLC community – and that everyone has a role to play in supporting the College in meeting its aspirations around EDI. To that end, we will ensure:

- Staff, students, contractors (including subcontractors), suppliers and stakeholders are aware of the value placed upon equality of opportunity and that action will be taken in the event of any breach of the scheme.
- Governors and staff have access to relevant and appropriate information which assists them to plan, implement and monitor actions to carry out their responsibilities under the scheme.
- The College's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about age, disability, gender identity, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and cultural diversity.
- Schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity and positive promotion of age, disability, gender identity, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and cultural diversity issues.
- All students can access appropriate support and facilities.
- Applicants for employment are drawn from a wide pool, with positive action, where appropriate, to encourage applications from under-represented groups.
- Recruitment and promotion procedures are designed and implemented to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

A guide to individual key roles and responsibilities is available at Appendix B.

Feedback and complaints

The College welcomes contact from stakeholders, individuals and/or organisations that wish to discuss any issues relating to EDI. Any complaints raised will receive a response in line with the College Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure, available via the College's website here: <https://www.liv-coll.ac.uk/the-college/college-policies/>.

Employees should use the appropriate college HR procedures should they feel they have been subject to discriminatory practice, with all policies available via the HR SharePoint site.

Should you wish to provide feedback or to find out more about equality, diversity and inclusion at The City of Liverpool College, you are encouraged to get in touch at enquiries@liv-coll.ac.uk or 0151 252 3000, who will ensure you are contacted by the most appropriate member of the team.

Appendix A: Glossary of terms

Age: One of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010). Age refers to a person belonging to a particular age group, which can include people of the same age and people of a particular range of ages.

Anti-racism: A term commonly used to describe practice that goes beyond being 'non-racist' and instead describes positive steps taken to actively combat racism and the effects of racism.

Antisemitism: Linked to a certain perception of Jewish people, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. (See the IHRA for ways in which this working definition may manifest in practice: <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>)

Disability: The legal definition of disability is "one who has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities." The definition of disability does not only refer to people who may be visibly disabled, for example those who are blind or have mobility difficulties, like wheelchair users. It also includes a broad range of conditions like Depression, Diabetes, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Asperger's Syndrome, Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, HIV and Schizophrenia.

Discrimination: Any action which deprives an individual of rights or opportunities. It may be either direct or indirect, by association, or by perception.

Direct discrimination: Occurs where a person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic than they treat, or would treat, others.

Discrimination by association: Occurs where a person is treated less favourably because of their association with a person with a particular protected characteristic e.g., a parent, partner, child, friend etc.

Discrimination by perception: Occurs where someone is *perceived* to have a particular characteristic and treated less favourably as a consequence e.g., an assumption about an individual's sexuality leading them to being treated less favourably as a result of that belief.

Discrimination because of pregnancy or maternity: The treatment of an individual less favourably because they are or have been pregnant, have given birth in the last 26 weeks or is breastfeeding a baby who is 26 weeks or younger. It is direct sex discrimination to treat a woman less favourably because she is breastfeeding a child who is more than 26 weeks old.

Due regard: The Equality Act (2010) states that public bodies must have *due regard* to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and foster good relations between people from different groups. *Due regard* in this context means consciously thinking about and including the three aims of the general duty as *part* of the process of decision-making.

Ethnicity: An ethnic group is typically regarded as a distinct community which shares a common descent, whether as a racialised group, a national origin or cultural background/tradition.

Gender identity: Gender identity is the person's internal perception and experience of their own gender. In law, gender is binary and defined as male or female; the College acknowledges a greater diversity of genders in line with best practice.

Gender reassignment: Under the Equality Act, gender reassignment refers to medical or surgical treatment to reassign your sex. To be protected from gender reassignment discrimination, you do not need to have undergone any medical treatment or surgery to change from your birth sex to your preferred gender. You can be at any stage in the transition process, from proposing to reassign your sex, undergoing a process of reassignment, or having completed it. It does not matter whether or not you have applied for or obtained a Gender Recognition Certificate, which is the document that confirms the change of a person's legal sex.

Harassment: Harassment is defined as when a person is subjected to unwanted behaviour related to one or more of the protected characteristics, with either the purpose or the effect of:

- Violating a person's dignity
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment
- Unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour

Indirect discrimination: Occurs where an unjustifiable provision, criteria or practice in the same way for all people or a particular group of people but this has the effect of those people who share a protected characteristic within the overall group being subject to a particular disadvantage.

Institutional discrimination: A collective failure of an organisation (the institution) to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their protected characteristics.

Islamophobia: Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.

Marriage and civil partnership: Marriage and civil partnership is a protected characteristic referring to both heterosexual couples and same-sex couples who have entered into a civil partnership or a marriage.

Positive action: Positive action is a range of measures allowed under the Equality Act 2010 which can be lawfully taken to encourage and train people from under-represented groups

to help them overcome disadvantages in competing with other applicants. Positive action must not be confused with positive discrimination, which is unlawful, e.g., the setting of quotas (as opposed to targets, which are lawful) or any other form of preferential treatment, excluding reasonable adjustments which may give preferential treatment to an individual with a disability.

Race: Race is a protected characteristic that refers to an individual's race, colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

Religion or belief: The term “religion or belief” means any religion, denomination of religion and religious or philosophical belief. As a protected characteristic under the Equality Act, it also includes “no” religion and atheism.

Sex (or gender): The protected characteristic that refers to a man or woman.

Sexual harassment: When a person is subjected to unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature and which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Sexual orientation: In law, sexual orientation is a protected characteristic relating to a person's sexual orientation towards people of:

- The same sex as him or her (the person is a gay man or a lesbian).
- The opposite sex from him or her (the person is heterosexual).
- Both sexes (the person is bisexual).

The College acknowledges a greater diversity of sexual orientations in line with good practice, including asexuality (a ‘lack’ of sexual attraction).

Transexual/Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from their gender assigned at birth. Transgender can refer to a range of groups including transsexual people and those who see themselves as not clearly fitting into a male or female identity. An individual does not have to alter their body via hormone or surgical treatment to be transgender.

Victimisation: If a person has made or is making an accusation of discrimination in good faith, it is unlawful to discriminate against them for having done so, because they intend to do so or it is suspected/understood that they intend to do so.

Appendix B: Key roles and responsibilities

Equality, diversity and inclusion are everyone's responsibility and all members of The City of Liverpool College community have a role to play in supporting and implementing the aims of this Single Equality Scheme. Students, staff, governors, visitors and partners are all expected to behave in a way that adheres to our policies around equality, diversity and inclusion.

Key roles and responsibilities are identified below:

The **Corporation Board** (the College's governing body) is responsible for ensuring that appropriate mechanisms are in place to set strategic objectives around equality and diversity in line with the strategic direction, character and mission of the College. In addition, the Board is responsible for ensuring:

- that the City of Liverpool College complies with the law and meets all its duties under equalities legislation;
- that the Single Equality Scheme and its commitments are followed, implemented and subject to monitoring and evaluation in line with the schedule set out within this document;
- that sufficient resources are made available for the implementation of the Single Equality Scheme;
- that the College's strategic plan and the Single Equality Scheme are fully aligned and that the strategic plan pays due regard to the College's general duties under the Equality Act (2010);
- that the Board receives regular updates on the way in which the College meets its obligations under the Scheme and wider EDI activities;
- that Board members act as positive ambassadors in line with the College's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion; and
- that Board members are aware of their obligations under equalities legislation and this Scheme as members of the College, and sufficiently trained to enable them to meet these obligations both as members of the College's governing body and the wider CoLC community.

The **Principal & Chief Executive** has overall responsibility for this Single Equality Scheme, and for ensuring the effective application of the College's equality and diversity policy and procedures. In line with the College's governing documents, the principal shall not allow or condone any actions or procedures within the jurisdiction of the College which may have an adverse impact on any individuals or groups in respect of gender or marital status, race, disability and/or learning difficulties, sexual orientation, transgender/gender re-assignment, religion or belief, age or other protected characteristics.

In addition, the Principal chairs The City of Liverpool College's **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy Group**, which has responsibility for:

- Providing a strategic forum to identify and discuss equality, diversity and inclusion considerations;
- Supporting the development and implementation of EDI strategies in support of this Single Equality Scheme and other policies and procedures which will ensure that all students and staff are enabled to achieve their full potential, irrespective of age,

- disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity;
- Promoting the continuing professional development of all employees within the College on an insight-driven basis with regards to EDI considerations;
 - Fostering a culture of innovation in which equality, diversity and inclusion is promoted, positively maintained and embedded at all levels of the organisation and across all functions; and,
 - Monitoring, evaluating and recommending interventions regarding EDI issues in line with our strategic plan and overall commitments and equality objectives as set out within this scheme.

The **Strategic Leadership Team** are responsible for:

- Overall implementation of our equality commitments and the promotion of EDI in everything we do;
- Leading in creating a positive, inclusive environment in which everybody is treated with respect and dignity and diversity is welcomed;
- Ensuring this Single Equality Scheme underpins the organisation's business planning, policies and procedures;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of the Single Equality Scheme and their responsibilities in implementing this;
- Ensuring that equality and diversity issues are considered and addressed within the organisation's quality assurance and improvement processes and mechanisms;
- Embedding EDI considerations within staff and departmental targets, whether part of the annual appraisal or broader planning cycles;
- Rigorously evaluating performance data through an EDI lens as it relates to key learner metrics and service targets;
- Leading inclusive educational practices;
- Disseminating good practice across the organisation;
- Acting as positive ambassadors for equality, diversity and inclusion both within the organisation and externally on behalf of the College, in line with the College's strategic plan and equality objectives;
- Implementing systems that deal with incidents of discrimination or harassment effectively when they arise, and taking proactive steps to minimise any such occurrence;
- Ensuring that all premises and facilities are accessible; and,
- Ensuring that the procedures for procurement are inclusive open to all.

The **Vice Principal (Curriculum Development & Innovation)** is responsible for:

- Delivering inclusive education practices within all learning environments and curriculum areas.
- Ensuring that EDI is promoted, maintained and embedded across all curriculum content and structures in line with this Single Equality Scheme and other key teaching initiatives across the College.
- Closing any gaps in student performance metrics (e.g., retention, achievement, progression) across different groups of learners through the identification of areas for

intervention, implementation of improvement plans and rigorous monitoring and quality assurance of the effectiveness of those interventions.

- Ensuring that the admissions criteria for all curriculum courses is fair and does not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics.

The **Deputy Chief Executive** is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the College's subcontracting partners adhere to the same standards and expectations regarding EDI policies and practices to the benefit of our learners, and that this is reflected appropriately in quality assurance and improvement processes and contract management mechanisms.
- Ensuring that all College facilities are accessible and that any future building works continue to develop in line with best practice and the College's aspirations around EDI.
- Ensuring that all procurement processes comply with the organisation's legal obligations and strategic direction in relation to EDI.

The **Estates and Facilities** department has primary responsibility for facilitating the accessibility of the College's buildings.

The **Deputy Principal** is responsible for:

- Delivering inclusive education practices within all student support functions.
- Leading on the delivery of suitably resourced and skills additional learning support services for students across all curriculum areas.
- Embedding good practice in relation to EDI across all student support functions and ensuring equal access to support for all learner groups in line with need.
- Commissioning relevant targeted CPD for staff providing support directly to students which may be impacted by knowledge and understanding of specific challenges linked to protected characteristics or facilitating access to external services as appropriate.

The **Director of Diversity & Inclusion** is responsible for:

- Acting as a consistent and high-profile lead on EDI within the College.
- Promoting the Single Equality Scheme and associated supporting strategies and policies, ensuring that the SES is implemented effectively and reported on.
- Analysis of data monitoring information, commissioning insights into lived experiences of our students and staff through an EDI lens and the production and publication of the annual EDI report.
- Developing relevant programmes of training for staff in support of the implementation of this Scheme and other EDI activities for the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives.

The **HR Director** will oversee key aspects of the College's EDI strategies and policies in relation to the College's workforce, with responsibility for:

- Developing, implementing and monitoring of staff development proposals, staff consultation and guidance and policy on all equality matters in relation to employment.
- Working with the Director of Diversity & Inclusion to develop policies and practice which supports the delivery of specific equality outcomes regarding our staffing profile, including positive action where appropriate.
- Compiling regular reports on staffing, including demographics and employment matters in terms of equality and diversity indicators for the EDISG and SLT.
- Ensuring that complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying among staff are robustly investigated in line with the College's policies and procedures, including this Single Equality Scheme.
- Ensuring all staff are appropriately trained in respect of College policies, processes and expectations regarding equality, diversity and inclusion as part of our mandatory training requirements for all staff.
- Ensuring that the end-to-end staff recruitment process is designed and conducted in line with the College's obligations under law and with this Single Equality Statement and other key EDI policies and initiatives as agreed by the EDISG and SLT.

Human Resources may provide informal advice in the first instance to any member of staff prior to bringing any complaint or grievance.

The **Director of Pedagogy & Insight** is responsible for the robust design, implementation and evaluation of quality assurance and improvement practices which ensure that EDI is embedding across the student experience in line with this Single Equality Statement. In addition, the Director of Pedagogy & Insight will support the evaluation of student data and strengthening of the student voice to provide insights into the student experience through an EDI lens and to assist the VP Curriculum (Development & Innovation) in identifying and closing any gaps in student performance relating to different groups of learners within the cohort.

The **Director of Funding & MIS** is responsible for ensuring the collection, management and timely reporting of learner data which supports the delivery of equality objectives and practices set out within this Scheme and other key EDI policies.

All managers are responsible for ensuring their staff are aware of the Single Equality Scheme and their specific responsibilities under this scheme, and for ensuring that they carry out departmental practice in line with organisational policies (e.g., staff training, appraisal, recruitment) around EDI. All managers should set appropriate equality and diversity objectives within their department, paying due regard to this Single Equality Scheme and the aspirations set out within the College's strategic plan and key initiatives.

Curriculum managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that admissions criteria do not discriminate against or unnecessarily exclude any individual or group of learners (where appropriate).

- Monitoring course data to address in a timely manner any issues of under-representation or underperformance by any group of learners.
- Ensuring that students are aware of their responsibilities and rights in respect of discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying and of the procedures for making complaints.
- Taking appropriate and immediate action in the event of incidents of harassment, bullying, victimisation, or discrimination.
- Being aware of the variety of students' personal circumstances and difficulties which may impede learning and the appropriate referral points available provide guidance and referrals to additional support services.
- Fully addressing equality and diversity issues in course self-assessment and development plans.

All staff are required to: deal equally and fairly with colleagues, internal and external customers irrespective of, age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity or any other grounds take appropriate and immediate action in the event of incidents of harassment, victimization or discrimination and if necessary, alert or involve more senior staff.

Tutors/ Lecturers/Assessors and Learning Support Staff have responsibility for:

- Having and communicating high expectations of all students regardless of their age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity or any other grounds ensure that curriculum materials do not exclude any individual or group of students.
- Embedding EDI and inclusive educational practices within the content and delivery of curriculum.
- Responding to key cross-college initiatives designed to support the delivery of our equality objectives: the Liverpool Way, becoming a trauma-informed organisation, the social and cultural curriculum, decolonising the curriculum.
- Creating a classroom ethos and learning environment which is inclusive and enables all learners to feel comfortable and is conducive to learners realising their full potential.
- Providing guidance and referrals of learners to additional support services
- Adopting marking policies and assessment methods which do not discriminate against any individual or group of learners.
- Being aware of the ways in which disadvantage or discrimination can manifest in the learning environment and taking proactive steps to counter this.
- Taking appropriate and immediate action in the event of incidents of harassment, victimisation or discrimination and if necessary, alerting or involving more senior staff.
- Explicitly addressing any issues of stereotyped attitudes and prejudiced thinking in order to develop learner awareness of the basic concepts of equality and diversity.
- Ensuring students are aware of and understand their rights and obligations under this Single Equality Scheme

Students should:

- Have high expectations of the College to tackle discrimination and promote equality and diversity treat all staff, students and visitors with respect at all times.
- Abide by the Single Equality Scheme and Student Code of Conduct at all times.
- Report incidents of harassment, victimisation or discrimination to a member of College staff.

All members of the College community have a duty to act in accordance with this Single Equality Scheme, and therefore to treat colleagues, students and visitors to the College with respect at all times and not to discriminate or harass other students or members of staff.

Any student or member of staff who breaches the policy may face disciplinary action.