Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy Number:
045-2008

Academic Year:
2026/2027

Target Audience:
All Staff

Summary of Contents
To outline the College's commitment to equal opportunities.

Enquiries
Any enquiries about the contents of this document should be addressed to:

Title: Deputy Chief Executive

E-mail: policies@serc.ac.uk

Review Information (Responsible Owner):
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Last Reviewed: August 2026

Next Review: August 2027

Change Type at last Review:

~~No~~/Minor/~~Significant~~ (delete as appropriate)

Approval/Noting By:
CMT: 9 October 2026

Lead GB Committee: Finance & Staffing

Governing Body Approval: October 2026

Related Documents:
Dignity at work policy

Superseded Documents (if applicable):
N/A

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April 2017

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January 2024

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1.0 Change History

Changes to this Policy are documented in Appendix 1 of this document. When reading electronic copies of this document, you can click here to view the change history.

2.0 Scope and Purpose

This policy applies to all employees of the South Eastern Regional College (hereafter referred to as the College).

2.1 The purpose of the policy is to emphasise to the commitment of the College to the promotion of equality of opportunity.

2.2 This policy does not form part of the contract of employment and may be amended at any time. The College will consult on proposed changes to this policy.

3.0 General Principles

The College is an equal opportunities employer and is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All full-time and part-time employees and job applicants (actual or potential) will be treated fairly and selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability.

3.1 The College will promote a good and harmonious working environment in which our employees will be treated with dignity and respect.

3.2 The College will endeavour to ensure that our workplace and our employment policies and practices do not unreasonably exclude or disadvantage those of our job applicants and employees who have disabilities and will comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments.

The College recognises that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice; it also makes sound business sense. The equal opportunities policy will help all employees to develop their full potential, and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

4.0 Statement of Policy

4.1 The College will not discriminate unlawfully against or harass any person on the grounds of:

Sex	Pregnancy or maternity	Gender reassignment
Martial or Civil partnership status	Religious belief	Political opinion
Racial group	Sexual orientation	Disability
Age		

All College employees have a right to work in a good and harmonious environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and to complain about such behaviour should it occur. The College has a Dignity at Work policy to deal with such complaints and aggrieved employees are encouraged to use it. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially.

4.2 Employees who make complaints of discrimination and harassment, and others who give evidence or information in connection with such complaints, will not be victimised (i.e. they will not be discriminated against or harassed in retaliation for their actions). Victimisation is also discrimination contrary to the equality laws and this policy.

All employees must treat each other with dignity and respect. Employees must not themselves commit any acts of unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment against any other person, such as their co-workers, job applicants or customers. Such behaviour will not be permitted or condoned and will be treated as misconduct which may warrant dismissal from employment.

4.3 All College employees should discourage discrimination and harassment by making it clear that they find such behaviour unacceptable and by supporting co-workers who suffer such treatment. Any employee who is aware of any incident of discrimination or harassment should alert a manager or supervisor to enable the College to deal with it.

5.0 Implementation

5.1 The Deputy Chief Executive has operational responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. The College Management Team and School/Unit Managers also have responsibilities to create a good and harmonious working environment.

In order to implement this policy, the College will ensure that:

- The policy is communicated to all employees, through induction training, management training, team briefings, HR Intranet and made known to job applicants.
- The Chief Executive, School/Unit Managers are aware of their responsibilities through appropriate and regular training.
- Appropriate training and guidance will be provided. In particular, all those involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion, will be trained in non-discriminatory recruitment and selection techniques.
- Specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing this policy is incorporated into the job descriptions of staff.
- Consultation will take place with recognised trade unions/employee representatives on the implementation of this policy and on any proposed amendments.
- Adequate resources are made available to fulfil the aims of this policy.

6.0 Monitoring and Review

The composition of staff, applicants for employment and appointees will be monitored on the basis of Gender, Marital or Civil Partnership status, having or not having Dependants, Religious Belief or Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins or being an Irish Traveller), Disability, Sexual Orientation or Age, to measure the effectiveness of this policy. Monitoring provides an objective view of the existence and progress of equality of opportunity.

6.1 The College will take such affirmative action as is deemed lawful, appropriate and necessary to ensure equality of opportunity. Goals and timetables, where appropriate, will be set to measure progress that can reasonably be expected as a result of affirmative action

The College is committed to a process of consultation with recognised trade unions and staff representatives on this policy.

7.0 Responsible Owner

7.1 It is the responsibility of the Deputy Chief Executive to ensure that this policy is implemented, adhered to and reviewed.

8.0 Communication Plan

The policy will be placed on the SERC intranet and will be available to all staff.

9.0 Review

This Policy will be reviewed annually, or when the need for change has been identified..

Appendix 1: Document Change History

Version	Date	Change Detail
1.0	January 2024	Transferred to New Accessibility Template
1.1	March 2024	Reviewed and no changes are necessary
1.2	November 2024	Cover updated to reflect recent structure changes. Updated Section: Any enquiries about the content of this document should be addressed to: Deputy Chief Executive Bangor Campus Castle Park Road, Bangor, BT20 4TD Section 5.1 updated to reflect recent structure changes. Updated Section: The Deputy Chief Executive has operational responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. Section 7.1 updated to reflect recent structure changes. Updated Section: It is The responsibility of the Deputy Chief Executive to ensure that this policy is implemented, adhered to and reviewed. Section 8.1 updated to reflect communication channels Updated Section: The policy will be placed on the SERC intranet and will be available to all staff.
1.3	November 2024	Cover sheet updated and review changed to annually
1.4	August 2025	Annual review no changes
1.5	August 2026	Cover sheet updated and wording changes in section 4.1 (to reflect College policy Dignity At work) 8,9. Section 6.1 removal of review periods – changed to reflect annual reviews.