

Hove College

Equality and diversity policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Hove College is committed to providing a supportive and inclusive culture for:

- our students
- our staff and
- other stakeholders.

We recognise the positive value of diversity, promoting equality and fairness, and challenging discrimination.

We welcome our legal duties not to discriminate as an education provider and an employer. We aim to go beyond the narrow scope of legislative compliance and follow best practice, making equality, fairness and diversity a fundamental part of all our activities.

We recognise people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and we wish to encourage and harness these differences to make our services more relevant and approachable.

1.2 Hove College will not discriminate or tolerate discriminatory behaviour on the grounds of race, colour, sex, gender identity (transgender), disability, nationality, national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, marital / partnership or family status, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, social class, educational background, employment status, working pattern, or any other irrelevant factor.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy relates to all aspects of work undertaken by Hove College including employment, recruitment and selection, for staff, students, and other associated third parties.

3. Legal obligations

3.1 In valuing diversity, Hove College is committed to go beyond the legal minimum regarding equality. Current equality legislation and associated codes of practice are taken into account, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended).
- Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended).

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended).
- The Employment Rights Act 1996.
- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Work and Families Act 2006.
- Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended).
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003.
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003.
- Civil Partnership Act 2004 (as amended).
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

4. Meeting students' needs

4.1 We are committed to treating all students equally and fairly and to not discriminate unlawfully against them. We will also, wherever possible, take steps to promote equal opportunity. We will ensure that students:

- are able to access the college facilities in ways that suit them
- are given help that is relevant to their course and situation
- are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and without discrimination
- have their needs listened to, and met whenever possible.
- Are not subjected to bullying in any of its forms.

4.2 Hove College is committed to meeting the diverse needs of students. We will take account, in particular, of the needs of students with a disability. We will consider whether particular groups are predominant within our student base and devise appropriate policies / procedures to meet their needs. Such groups include: men and women, members of religious groups; ethnic groups or nationalities.

5. Employment

5.1 General statement

As an employer, Hove College will treat all employees and job applicants equally and fairly and not unlawfully discriminate against them. This will, for example, include arrangements for recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, access to training opportunities, access to promotions and transfers, grievance and disciplinary processes, selections for redundancy, references and any other employment related activities.

5.2 Recruitment and selection

We recognise the benefits of having a diverse workforce and will take steps to ensure that:

- we endeavour to recruit from the widest pool of qualified candidates practicable

- employment opportunities are open and accessible to all on the basis of their individual qualities and personal merit
- any third parties acting for Hove College in respect of employment are made aware of the requirements not to discriminate and act accordingly.

5.3 Training and development

We will ensure that all employees are encouraged to achieve their full potential. Selection for all training and career development opportunities will be purely on the basis of merit. Appraisals of performance will be conducted objectively and on time.

5.4 Meeting individual needs

Hove College will do its utmost to meet the needs of individuals at work, for example:

- Recognising caring and domestic responsibilities.
- Working patterns - wherever possible meetings will be planned to allow attendance by staff working non-standard hours.
- Disability – reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to remove barriers and enable disabled staff to carry out their roles.
- Religious practices – time off and suitable facilities for prayer will be provided wherever possible. Requests for annual leave to celebrate religious festivals will be accommodated wherever possible.

6. Students

6.1 General statement

Students contribute significantly to the diversity of the college. They can expect to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and without discrimination. They are likewise expected to treat others fairly, with dignity and respect, and without discrimination.

7. Implementing the policy

7.1 Responsibilities

7.1.1 All staff

At all levels of the organisation staff are expected to have read and understood this policy, to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles and requirements, to encourage the same level of behaviour in colleagues and immediately report any breaches witnessed, whenever it is reasonable for them to do so.

7.1.2 All managers

Managers are responsible for promoting this policy and ensuring it is understood and complied with by all staff in their area.

7.2 Conduct and general standards of behaviour:

All staff are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and considerate manner at all times. Hove College will not tolerate behaviour such as:

- making threats
- physical violence
- shouting
- swearing at others
- Bullying
- rudeness
- isolating, ignoring or refusing to work with certain people
- telling offensive jokes or name calling
- displaying offensive material or the distribution of such material via email / text message or any other format.

Hove College encourages staff to resolve misunderstandings and problems informally wherever possible, depending on the circumstances. However, whether dealt with informally or formally, it is important for staff who may have caused offence to understand that it is no defence to say that they did not intend to do so, or to blame individuals for being over sensitive. It is the impact of the behaviour, rather than the intent, that counts, and that should shape the solution found both to the immediate problem and to preventing further similar problems in the future.

7.3 Complaints of discrimination

Hove College will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination on any forbidden grounds made by employees, students or other third parties and will take action where appropriate.

All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the organisation's grievance or complaints procedure and the complainant will be informed of the outcome in line with these procedures.

We will also monitor the number and outcomes of complaints of discrimination made by staff, students and other third parties.

8. Monitoring

8.1. Hove College will monitor and record equal opportunities information about staff on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity and disability.

8.2 We will store equal opportunities data as confidential personal data and restrict access to this information. Equal opportunities information will be used exclusively for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring and will have no bearing on opportunities or benefits.

We will monitor all elements of:

- recruitment and selection processes
- promotion and transfer
- training
- terms and conditions of employment
- grievance and disciplinary procedures
- resignations, redundancies and dismissals.

9. Review

9.1 This policy will be reviewed not less than once a year or more regularly if we identify any non-compliance or problem or in the light of emerging legislation or best practice that could impact on this policy.

Next review: April 2019