



Discrimination Policy & Procedures

'Education has a crucial role to play in bringing about a fair and just society. It is important that people learn to respect themselves and each other as citizens, so that we can build a society which is based on mutual respect and understanding.'



1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bolton College is committed to creating an inclusive environment which is free from discrimination and encourages and helps all who learn and work at the College to reach their full potential. The College actively promotes equal opportunities and celebrates diversity (people's differences).
- 1.2 As a college, we will not accept any form of discrimination and we are committed to reporting, recording and acting on all such incidents sensitively and efficiently. We work closely with the police and other recognised groups to tackle discrimination.
- 1.3 We respond to incidents of discrimination differently from other complaints, because the incident has taken place as a result of a person's race, religion, gender/gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or age and not, as a result of something that person has done. Incidents of discrimination and harassment in relation to a person's race, disability or age are against the law.
- 1.4 The College will take action when anyone:
 - Uses offensive language, or is responsible for offensive graffiti or pictures (this includes jokes and comments that may be seen as discriminatory)
 - Treats individuals or groups less favourably because they appear to be different.
 - Behaves inappropriately whilst on college premises or within the community as a representative of the college

2. What is Discrimination?

- 2.1 The College uses the following definitions of direct and indirect discrimination:
 - 'Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.'
For example: if a student was unfairly given a lower grade in an assessment because the person marking it knew the student was gay.
 - 'Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would disadvantage people on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim.'
For example: the College organising an examination on the date of a major religious festival.

(Definitions provided by the European Commission)

3. What is an Incident of Discrimination at College?

- 3.1 An incident of discrimination is any activity which prevents anyone from accessing and/or enjoying their College learning or working environment because of their race, religion, gender/gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or age. As well as the distress this behaviour causes to individual people, it damages our College and local communities.



3.2 The college will consider an incident to be discriminative if **any** person witnessing it considers it to be motivated by race, religion, gender/gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or age.

- 3.3 Incidents may include but are not limited to:
- verbal or written threats (including electronic media)
 - abuse, violence or threatened violence
 - attacks on personal belongings or property
 - graffiti

4. Why Should you Report an Incident of Discrimination?

- 4.1 If incidents are not reported, the College cannot:
- support its students, staff and other customers
 - deal appropriately with the people responsible for discriminating against others
 - understand how much of a problem there is and, as a result, assign enough resources to address the problem
 - be effective in working with partner agencies to stop incidents happening

5. Reporting Discrimination

- 5.1 It is important to report all incidents as soon as possible after they have taken place and there are a number of ways to do this:
- Complete a Discrimination Incident Reporting Form (Appendix 1)
 - Speak to any member of College staff who will help complete the form
 - Send written details to the Customer Services Manager at Deane Road, Bolton BL3 5BG or customer.services@boltoncc.ac.uk

6. How the College Deals with Discrimination

- 6.1 Once we become aware of an incident we will:
- 6.2 Record the incident using the Discrimination Incident Reporting Form (Appendix 1)
- Written details will be taken and the person reporting the incident will be asked to confirm that the College has an accurate record of the incident.
 - We will also go through our Discrimination Policy and Procedure to make sure that they are understood and possible courses of action are clear.
- 6.3 Assign an Officer to investigate the incident
- In all circumstances, the person accused of discrimination will have the right to be heard and protected.
 - We will always consider the rights of all those involved and will listen to all parties.
 - In the case of crime or possible crime, we will report the incident to the police immediately. However, if the incident is considered to be serious but not criminal by the College, we will request permission from the victim before we involve the police.
 - The College may also refer to other policies and procedures such as the Bullying and Harassment Policy and Disciplinary Procedures.



- 6.4 Make sure the victim is safe
- The College will offer support to the victim. This may include referral to one of our partner organisations with specialist knowledge.
- 6.5 Make sure others are safe
- The College will offer support to others as appropriate. This may include referral to one of our partner organisations with specialist knowledge.
- 6.6 Try to prevent the incident from happening again
- The College will produce an action plan to prevent the incident happening again. An action plan may include such elements as additional training, a change to processes, further consultation etc
 - The College will remove any offensive graffiti from buildings belonging to us. If there is offensive graffiti on nearby buildings, we will tell the owner or Bolton Council Environmental Care immediately.
- 6.7 Take action against any persons found guilty of discrimination
- The College may withdraw services from the person or people who are responsible where we consider this appropriate
 - The College may also refer to other policies and procedures such as the Bullying and Harassment Policy and Disciplinary Policy
- 6.8 Inform the victim of our findings and actions
- The College will write to the victim to inform them of the outcome of the investigation and the actions that have or will be taken to prevent further similar incidents taking place

7. Confidentiality

- 7.1 If specific information within a report of discrimination is to be kept confidential, the victim should make this clear when reporting the incident. Customers should understand that in exceptional circumstances it may be difficult for confidentiality to be respected, for instance where a criminal offence or potential gross misconduct has been disclosed. Victims should also understand that in some circumstances the demand for confidentiality may make it difficult for the College to address incidents of discrimination.

8. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

- 8.1 It may be that an incident relates to the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of someone under the age of 18 or someone who is deemed to be a "vulnerable adult". In these circumstances the College has a legal obligation to report cases of suspected abuse or cases of someone being at risk of abuse.

Therefore, disclosures of this kind to any members of staff (including the College Counselling Service) may not remain confidential, as the person "at risk" will require protection.

- 8.2 If you wish to report or discuss this type of incident contact either:
- Eileen Nicholson, Students Service Manger



- Rosie Croarkin, Safeguarding Officer
- Janet Greenwood, Childcare Manager
- Jane Marsh, Director of Human Resources
- Mark Burgoyne, Vice Principal

9. Timescales

- 9.1 If the incident results in a crime or a possible crime, we will report it to the police immediately.
- 9.2 If the incident is serious, and the victim gives their permission, we will report it to the police immediately.
- 9.3 We will assign an Investigating Officer within one working day of receiving details of an incident.
- 9.4 We will make sure that we remove any offensive graffiti on our buildings within one working day. If there is offensive graffiti on nearby buildings we will tell the owner or Bolton Council Environmental Care within one working day.
- 9.5 We will interview the victim and then offer appropriate support within 7 working days.
- 9.6 If it is practical, the Investigating Officer will interview the person accused of the incident within 10 working days.
- 9.7 The Investigating Officer will contact the victim in writing to confirm what action has or is being taken within 14 working days. However, exceptional circumstances may make it difficult to achieve this response time. In such cases the victim will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

10. Reporting

- 10.1 The Colleges' Equality & Diversity Group will receive a confidential report once a term on the number and nature of Incidents of Discrimination reported and the actions taken (individual people will not be named). This report will also be presented to the Colleges' Senior Management Team and the Standards Committee.

11. Equalities Statement

- 11.1 English is our principal language but we will endeavour to provide information relating to this Policy in other formats and languages. If customers require this type of support they should contact the Recruitment & Relations Manager on:

Telephone: 01204 48 2000

E-mail: customer.services@boltoncc.ac.uk

Address: Deane Road, Bolton BL3 5BG

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