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Foreword

London South East Colleges is ambitious for all who work and learn here. All our students and staff are helped and encouraged to develop their full potential within an ethos which recognises and values the benefits that a diverse workforce supporting a diverse student body can bring to both the local and wider community. As a College, we are incredibly fortunate to be part of such culturally rich local communities across London and the South East. We want to maximize our resources and expertise to bring even greater benefits to both our learners and their communities.

Our new Group strategy embodies this ambition; by positioning ourselves as a social enterprise, rather than simply delivering education, we will ensure that what we bring to our communities goes beyond qualifications. Our values are designed to not only bring out the very best of our staff, but also to set an example to our students on being exemplary citizens who believe in equity and celebrate diversity in all aspects of life.

Throughout the process of becoming one College, we have embedded a culture that the success of each and every student is at the core of the College's role. Governors, staff, students, employers, and visitors to the College are made aware of how highly we value each individual and how each person contributes to our inclusive and ambitious culture.

Advancing equity, eliminating discrimination, and fostering good relationships are all necessary for achieving our 2024-2030 Strategic Goals and this scheme will play a key role in reaching them.

Sam Parrett

Group Principal and CEO

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1. Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Goals

Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Plan 2024-2030

Our Vision (Our Why):

Transforming Lives through the Power of Learning: We believe that education changes lives and communities for the better.

Our Mission (Our What):

To provide leadership, knowledge and resources to unleash the power of learning as an agent for change.

Our Values:

Stand Out: We will stand out. We are a good education group with outstanding features. Keen to innovate, we create social value and push the boundaries to achieve more.

Teamwork: We are a team. Together we get the job done. Together we achieve our goals. It is everyone's job to step in and help.

Accountable: We own our actions. We take responsibility. We are accountable for the decisions we make and how these affect others. We own this.

Respectful: We respect everyone - full stop. Diversity is valued and we maximise this as a talent and strength.

Striving: Every day we strive to be better. To achieve more. To continuously improve, in all that we do. Individually, and as a group.

Our Strategic Goals (Our How):

People First: We are inclusive to everyone. We take a principled and personalised approach by learning, listening and treating everyone as individuals. All decisions are made with people at the centre.

Lead Locally: We take our public responsibility seriously. We serve communities and respond to their needs, creating social value and making a strong impact. We are more than education. We are leaders in the community.

Fearless Pioneers: One step ahead, we look courageously to the future and stand out with confidence. We take the lead in shaping the local and national agenda and are true pioneers of the sector. We are never afraid to take things on.

Continuously Innovate: Through our sector leading research and evidence-based policies, we promote best practice. We continually learn, looking outwards and inwards to support and improve the wider system through our innovative approaches.

Act Responsibly: Acting responsibly is core to everything we do. We are ethical, we have integrity, and we operate responsibly, treating everyone with respect. We don't let people fail. We always do the right thing.

The information below sets out the College's **key Strategic Themes and Goals** over the next six years (2024-2030):

Strategic Theme 1: People First

Our people, both staff and learners are amazing. They are talented, committed and they care. It is only through their hard work that we achieve our success.

Goal One: We will invest in our people to ensure that every person feels valued, recognised, and rewarded, and has the support they need to achieve their best in an inclusive organisation which fosters diversity.

Strategic Theme 2: Performance and Practice

We want the very best for our staff, our learners and the communities we serve. We want them to thrive. That's why we will focus on evidence informed performance and improvement. We will ask, 'how well we are doing?' and 'what do we need to do to continue to improve' every day in every way, helping us to collectively ensure a sustainable future.

Goal Two: We will embed a culture of research and innovation which fosters improved outcomes for all learners, supports organisational resilience and pioneers positive change in education system wide.

Strategic Theme 3: Prosperity and Place

Place matters. It's in our name, and part of our identity, our reason for being. Based in and part of our communities, we play a key role in civic life. It's a responsibility that we take seriously. We know place-based inequalities in England are long established and deep-rooted. We want to play our role, leading locally as an education provider and major employer, in helping address these.

Goal Three: We will maximise our assets, resource and expertise to effect positive change locally, driving towards net zero, developing social capital, enabling sustainable and inclusive growth in the communities we serve.

2. Scope

This Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy applies equally to all students, staff, visitors, employers, and other stakeholders of London South East Colleges. All teaching, learning and working practices across each of the campuses lie within the scope of the scheme.

3. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement of Intent

<p>Statement Purpose</p> <p>This statement demonstrates how London South East Colleges will ensure it fulfils its obligations and public sector equality duties as defined with the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>These obligations are defined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation• To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.• To foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not
<p>Statement Intent</p> <p>All people who work and learn within London South East Colleges are valued, and our intention is for everyone to be provided with the equitable opportunity to be able to perform well and reach their potential.</p> <p>This means listening to and understanding people’s views, and creating a working and learning environment where everyone is treated with respect and able to contribute fully.</p> <p>This means making sure that everyone feels included and valued for the talent and know-how they bring to the organisation.</p> <p>We recognise that there is urgent action required in all areas of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and our ambition is to engage with our student, staff, local communities and beyond, to challenge existing practice, divisions, barriers and privilege, that stand in the way of any individual or defined group achieving their potential.</p> <p>We will use the learning and insight gained through our various types of work within the education profession and practice, and as an employer in London and the South East, to inform the equity of our decisions and repurpose organisational practice.</p> <p>We will work relentlessly to continue to challenge ourselves both internally and externally, to better understand inequality in society.</p>
<p>Equity Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognising that each person has different circumstances, needs and starting points, and so may need different resources and opportunities to reach an equal outcome.• Knowing that we need to “level the playing field” both as an educator, and as an employer.• Providing Equity requires honesty about inequality and a commitment to individuals with unique needs, and those who are put at a disadvantage due to systemic inequality both in education and the workplace.• Recognising and addressing the imbalance of opportunities that that some people may face due to discrimination, privilege, divisions or other barriers.• Understanding the difference between Equity and Equality, and why you need to have both to create a diverse and inclusive workplace and educational institution.
<p>Equality Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being valued for who and what we are.• Achieving our professional goals and personal development counting on our collective diversity, social background, and experience to enrich what we do and how we do it.• Not being held back in our development by anyone’s preconceptions about our abilities.• Placing equality at the core of our employment, management, and teaching practice.• Knowing that our organisations are a fair and just place to work and learn.• Having a sense of identity and feeling able to express ourselves in our own way.

Diversity Means:

- Understanding that everyone is unique.
- Celebrating the fact that our staff and students are from a wide range of social and ethnic backgrounds.
- Acknowledging that teams are stronger and more effective when we acknowledge and embrace the different views, skills, and experiences around the table.
- Consulting whenever possible and listening to different viewpoints to improve how we work as a team.
- Explaining the rationale for our decisions.

Inclusion Means:

- Embracing all people irrespective of race, gender, disability, or other need.
- Providing equal access and opportunities and eliminating of discrimination and intolerance.
- Encouraging collaborative decision making and encouraging staff and students to talk honestly and openly.
- Empowering staff to contribute to a positive working and learning environment that is enjoyed by all.
- Removing the need for staff to negotiate / self-promote in order to get the recognition they deserve.
- Ensuring that equality of opportunity is transparent and open to all staff and students.

London South East Colleges is Committed to:

- ✓ Promotion of equity, diversity and inclusion as professional, practical, and positive issues which enrich our work.
- ✓ Ensuring all staff understand the implications of this statement for their day-to-day work and for how they treat and support colleagues and students.
- ✓ Embedding these principles in all our policies, processes, and project plans.
- ✓ Recruiting people who have the skills to put these principles into practice.
- ✓ Championing our principles in all our communications and publications.
- ✓ Supporting our partners and stakeholders to do likewise.
- ✓ Commit to providing a secure, safe, and inclusive learning and working environments for all.
- ✓ Use the information and data we gather to inform our decisions on closing gaps and improve our practice.
- ✓ Working with all communities within the London and the South East to foster good and positive relationships and improve life chances for all.

Our approach to equity, diversity and inclusion means that we value our differences above all else. Racism, bullying and harassment, directly or indirectly, will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

4. Legislation and Quality Frameworks

It is a core belief of the College that all students and staff should be valued and respected for their individuality. This approach is essential to enabling individuals to succeed and reach their full potential, which is the College's primary motivation for adopting a proactive approach to advancing equality and diversity. The College also recognises and embraces its legal and quality assurance framework responsibilities and uses these frameworks and Quality Kite Marks to monitor and further our development and progress of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

4.1 The Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010) are:

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

The Public Sector Equality Duty of the Act requires colleges to have due regard to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not.

The above three ‘arms’ of the Public Sector Equality Duty apply to all protected characteristics, except for marriage and civil partnership (where only the first arm, eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimization, applies).

The College is committed to eradicating all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation that may occur. This includes:

- Direct discrimination,
- Indirect discrimination,
- Discrimination by association,
- Discrimination linked to a perceived characteristic, also known as discrimination by perception.
- Harassment related to a protected characteristic,
- Sexual harassment,
- Less favourable treatment because of submission or rejection of sexual harassment,
- Victimisation of an individual who has, or is believed to have, done a “protected act”.

The College has a particular duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled students can participate fully in all aspects of college life and are able to enjoy all the benefits, facilities, and services. The College is also required to remove any barriers that may prevent a disabled member of staff from having the same access to everything involved in doing their job.

4.2 Quality Assurance and Regulatory Frameworks

4.2.1 OFSTED

As a publicly funded further education provider the College is subject to inspection by OFSTED. The inspection framework and evaluation criteria used by inspectors are made public by OFSTED. This framework sets out what is expected of the College and explicitly references the promotion of equality and diversity across all aspects of the College. Descriptors of what is considered to be outstanding practice are set out in the Further education and skills inspection handbook and can be found [here](#).

The key expectations of colleges in relation to equality and diversity are set out in the inspection framework and include:

- Data is used to monitor Retention, Pass and Achievement (RPA) rates, value added measures and progression after completing a Study Programme; particularly for learners with high-needs, special educational needs, those who are eligible for free school meals and Looked After Children.
- Leaders should promote all forms of equality and foster greater understanding and respect for others.
- Teaching and assessment should promote equality and raise awareness of diversity in addition to inspiring, challenging and meeting the needs of all learners.
- Learners are aware of and understand their rights and responsibilities as members of the College and of the wider community.
- British values are actively promoted to help prepare learners to live and work in Britain’s complex multicultural society.
- Learning programs and enrichment activities allow learners to explore personal, social and ethical issues.
- Variations in achievement of different groups of learners are addressed.

4.2.2 UK Quality Assurance Agency

The College’s higher education provision is quality assured by the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. The framework used by the UK QAA is published as the UK Quality Code. A key value of the Quality Code is that “every student is treated fairly and with dignity, courtesy and respect”.

5. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Executive Summary

Introduction

Our vision is to maximise our impact on the people and places we reach as an education provider. We strive to change people's lives, creating social value and promoting social mobility in every community we work with. Education will always be at the core of our work but for our learners and community to thrive we recognise that qualifications alone are not enough. We want to build strong, sustainable communities that are economically and socially prosperous.

Context

London South East Colleges exists at the heart of a widely diverse community, attracting students from a wide variety of backgrounds. The College celebrates this diversity and is committed to the promotion and advancement of equality in every aspect of its operation. The College has gained accreditation or made a commitment to the achievement of several quality standards and schemes, including:

- Disability Committed
- Investors in People
- Matrix quality standard
- Investing in Ethnicity Maturity Matrix
- Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index
- The Black Leadership Group's 10-point-plan
- UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award

It is a core belief of the College that all students and staff should be valued and respected for their individuality, and this is the College's primary motivation for adopting a proactive approach to advancing equality and diversity. The College also recognises and embraces its legal and quality assurance framework responsibilities, including responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the 2019 Ofsted Common Inspection Framework.

Progress against and closing of the 2020 – 2024 EDI Objectives

The previous Single Equality Scheme set out the previous Equality Objectives for 2021-2024. You can access and view our EDI Scorecard, which provides a summary of the final position of our 2020-2024 objectives, [here](#).

Implementing our EDI Objectives

The College conducts regular reviews and analyses of the profiles of both students and staff, as well as student achievement and retention rates, yearly audits on the Gender Pay Gap, and frequent meetings throughout the year with various Stakeholders that are key in implementing and furthering our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion work, including our SLT Sponsors, EDI Champions and Staff Network Groups. The information gathered across these events has also been used to develop the new EDI objectives for 2024-2030, and the new, updated Single Equality Scheme as a whole.

Implementation of these objectives will take place via a range of stakeholders including:

- Equality and Diversity Champions and Sponsors
- Equality and Diversity Action Plan
- Data analysis, SAR and Quality Process
- Learner Involvement, Voice, Enrichment (LIVE) Strategy
- Staff Forums
- Reporting and publishing progress
- Equality impact assessments

Progress against our objectives will be monitored through:

- The Board of Governors
- The Group Executive meetings
- The Equality, Diversity and Steering Committee
- The EDI Grants Steering Group

Progress on achieving objectives will be published in the London South East College's annual equality and diversity report.

6. 2024 – 2030 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives

<p>Data Collection, Monitoring & Reporting <i>To create a more inclusive environment for all staff and students by collecting, monitoring and reporting on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion data, as well as all aspects of the student and staff life cycles.</i></p>
<p>Underpinning Area Aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to maintain high disclosure rates for Staff and Student Data on EDI characteristics, including Sexual Orientation, Religion/Belief and Disability• Analyse and report on our Ethnicity Pay Gap and identify and act on any issues that may be highlighted in the report.• Data collection, monitoring & reporting of all aspects of the student and staff life cycle
<p>Student and Staff Engagement <i>To ensure Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is at the heart of who we are and what we do by encouraging and promoting student and staff engagement and participation in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives, and increasing their understanding of EDI issues.</i></p>
<p>Underpinning Area Aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to increase the support for, and the understanding, engagement and participation of students by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Developing student societies/groups under the Student Union○ Further embedding EDI issues through Enrolment, Tutorials & Enrichment Programmes• Conduct student and staff surveys, reviews and forums on EDI, including incentives for completion.• Continue to increase the support for, and the understanding, engagement and participation of staff by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Relaunching & restructuring Staff Network Groups○ Further developing the role of EDI champions to ensure they continue to feed into the EDI agenda to bring about impact and change to ensure input from all levels of the college.• Promote and implement recognition of EDI contributions made by students and staff in a variety of ways
<p>Achievements and Aspirations <i>To identify and narrow the achievement gaps for and increase the progression of students from Protected Characteristic groups through research projects, data monitoring and reporting, and action planning.</i></p>
<p>Underpinning Area Aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Narrow the achievement gap, at all levels for the following groups and the College Average:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. All Black/Black British Students (Including Black Caribbean, Black African and Black Other)b. Black/White Caribbean Dual Heritage Studentsc. Black/White African Dual Heritage Studentsd. Students with Mental Health Conditionse. Young Care Leavers• Monitor and report on intersectionality within the achievement gaps.• Conduct Research projects into the achievement gaps, identifying potential causes, and actions to tackle these issues.
<p>Staff and Student Mental Health <i>To create a more inclusive environment for all staff and students by promoting mental health awareness and support.</i></p>
<p>Underpinning Area Aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure work is implemented at all levels across the college to meet the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategic Objectives outlined in our Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Positive Action, Recruitment & Retention

To create a more inclusive and diverse workplace, which also reflects our student profile and local population, through positive action within our recruitment and retention processes.

Underpinning Area Aims

- Increase the proportion of women in departments with low representation, by implementing positive action measures.
- Increase proportion of Black, Asian, Dual Heritage and other Minority Ethnic staff across all management levels by implementing positive action measures.
- Implement Blind Recruitment throughout our recruitment process.

Tackling Inequality Grant Programme

Continue to fund EDI projects through our Tackling Inequality Grant Programme to increase equity, diversity and inclusion within the College and the local community.

Underpinning Area Aims

- Encourage staff and students to take up projects and applying for a grant, including focuses on:
 - Research projects into achievement gaps
 - EDI events/celebrations/linked to the EDI Calendar
- Ensure that the projects we fund are designed to bring about sustainable impact under Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

External Partnerships, Benchmarking, Accreditations & Schemes

To develop external partnerships and participate in benchmarking, accreditations and schemes related to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, to share best practice and receive expert advice and guidance to increase the impact and effectiveness of our EDI work.

Underpinning Area Aims

- Maintain and/or achieve higher awards/levels in accreditations we have previously received, including Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index, Investing in Ethnicity and Disability Confident.
- Identify and partake in additional Equity, Diversity and Inclusion charters, accreditations, benchmarks and awards, such as Investors in Diversity
- Work and collaborate with our Apprenticeship Partners and other educators to assist them with their EDI journey, whilst also sharing our good/best practice and learning from their experiences

Embedding Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in all aspects of Teaching, Learning & Assessment

Work to eliminate discrimination and advance equity, diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities by embedding Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in all aspects of teaching, learning & assessment.

Underpinning Area Aims

- Embedding EDI in the Curriculum through teaching, learning and assessment
- Ensure the curriculum is inclusive, considers the needs of all learners and is accessible by all.
- Implement Equality Impact Assessments, and all recommended actions, as appropriate

Staff Training & Continuous Professional Development

Deliver relevant, up-to date training to staff on issues relating to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, to ensure best practise is embedded throughout everything we do, with high completion levels.

Underpinning Area Aims

- Continue to deliver Inclusive Recruitment training and Embedding EDI in the Curriculum training to all relevant staff.
- Develop an inclusive career development pathway and advancement pipeline for staff from diverse backgrounds.
- Ensure the training we provide is relevant and up-to-date by reviewing and redesign our current mandatory training offer, and developing and delivering additional training as and when appropriate/needed, including more specific development and training for leaders on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

7. Our EDI History

Celebrating diversity and respecting individuals were core values of the Bexley, Bromley, and Greenwich Community Colleges; these values continue to be priorities for London South East Colleges. The merger in 2016 was an exciting opportunity to share and build upon the good practice that existed in each of the former colleges and aspects of excellence have been curated to create a strong platform for further advancement of equality and diversity practice at London South East Colleges.

We then brought in the Michael Tippet College in 2023, which supports 19–24-year-olds with a wide range of special needs and disabilities, and has Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at its core.

Examples of recent developments in Equity and Diversity include:

2009 - 2011	The Learning Resource Centres become more accessible with quiet pods for individual study, Portset text readers, laptops and tablets for students with learning or financial difficulties – Bromley and Orpington campuses of Bromley College.
2013	The Nido Volans Centre is opened at Bromley College providing specialty teaching and support facilities for learners with multiple and complex needs -Bromley College.
2013	The Celebrating Diversity Award is introduced to the Annual Staff Awards
2015	Metro LGBT+ sex education drop-in sessions begin - Greenwich College.
2016	Bromley, Bexley and Greenwich Community Colleges merge to form London South East Colleges. LSEC Equality and Diversity Steering Group established
2016	Members of staff represent the College in the Pride in London parade.
2016	LGBT+ & Disability Champion roles are introduced for staff.
2017	LSEC undertakes a major review of the College’s Equality and Diversity practice with the support of an external consultant.
2017	A second Nido Volans Centre is opened at the Erith campus.
2017	A cross-College Chaplaincy Coordinator role is introduced to work with students and staff, of all faiths and none, around spirituality and wellbeing.
2017	The College’s Equality Champions and Sponsors model is introduced.
2017	London South East Colleges becomes the second Further Education College to have achieved level 1 of the UNICEF Right Respecting Schools Award.
2018	The College’s LGBT+ Staff and Student Network take part in Pride in London.
2018	Female students begin attending Women of the Future events to expand their aspirations.
2019	Establishment of Wellbeing Team to support students’ emotional wellbeing and mental health.
2020	The Tackling Inequality Grant Programme was launched to fund projects run by students and/or staff that aimed to tackle inequality and promote diversity and inclusion.
2020	The Structure of the EDI Champions, Sponsors and Network Group initiative was enhanced to improve staff engagement in EDI matters
2022	New Mental Health Awareness course launched at Greenwich Adult and Community Learning.
2022	The College is named an “Exemplary Employer” for the first time by Investing in Ethnicity, an organisation set up to encourage a stronger focus on the ethnicity agenda in workplaces.
2023	The College wins the “Initiative of the Year” award at the EDI Worldskills UK Heroes Awards, for our pioneering 10-year ‘Tackling Inequality’ grants programme.
2023	The Michael Tippet College, which supports 19–24-year-olds with a wide range of special needs and disabilities, becomes a part of London South East Colleges, becoming Nido-Volans Lambeth.

2023	The College is named an “Exemplary Employer” for the second year in a row by Investing in Ethnicity and placed in the top 25 employers.
2024	The College is named an “Exemplary Employer” for the third year in a row by Investing in Ethnicity and placed in the top 25 employers for the second year running.
2024	The College, supported by the FE Commissioner and sponsored by the DfE, hosts an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Conference, as a part of the “Just One More Thing” Series.
2024	LSEC becomes one of the first FE Colleges in the country to sign up to the AoC’s Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Charter.
2024	LSEC is awarded the Gold Award in Stonewall’s Workplace Equality Index
2024	To date, our Tackling Equality Grant Programme, which was launched in 2020, has funded 13 DI projects within the College.

8. EDI Kite Marks, Accreditations and Schemes

The College has gained accreditation and/or made a commitment to the achievement of a number of quality standards/schemes. These include:

8.1 Investors in People

The standard signifies that London South East Colleges supports and manages its employees well for sustainable results.

8.2 UNICEF Right Respecting Schools Award

The College has a strong commitment to increasing young people's awareness of their and their confidence in asserting them. To demonstrate this commitment, the College has undertaken to gain the UNICEF Right Respecting Schools Award. The United Nations Convention states that every individual under the age of 18 is entitled to all 54 of the rights in the convention – these can be found [here](#). The College is determined to uphold these rights and to educate others about them.

Promoting the protection of these rights and upholding them for all students, including those over the age of 18, is an integral part of how the College’s fulfils its duties under the Equality Act. In June 2017 London South East Colleges became the second Further Education College to have achieved level 1 of this award.

8.3 Disability Confident – Committed

This is an assurance to potential employees that the College has agreed to meet five commitments around the recruitment, retention, training, and professional development of disabled employees.

8.4 Black Leadership Group

We are committed to implementing, as appropriate, the 10-point EDI plan of the Black Further Education Leadership Group. The 10-point plan can be found [here](#).

8.5 Stonewall Diversity Champion and Workplace Equality Index

As members of Stonewall’s Diversity Champions Programme, we work with Stonewall to create an inclusive and supportive workplace environment that makes LGBTQ+ people feel safe and encouraged in the workplace.

As Diversity Champion members, we also take part in Stonewall’s yearly Workplace Equality Index, a benchmarking tool that we use to measure our achievements and progress on LGBTQ+ inclusion in the workplace. After submitting we receive feedback on what is going well and any areas that need more focus and work, which we then use to create an action plan for the next year, so we can further develop and improve our work to increase LGBTQ+ inclusion within our workplace.

8.6 Investors in Ethnicity and the Maturity Matrix

Investing in Ethnicity works with employers to help them excel in the racial equity movement, by sharing best practice, giving a platform cross-sector collaboration, delivering workshops and consultations, and providing useful and informal resources for members to use.

Investing in Ethnicity also provides access to their Maturity Matrix, a free tool that organisations can use to assess and benchmark their progress in furthering the ethnicity agenda. The three main objectives for employers to achieve through the Matrix are:

- Outline key areas to embed sustainable change.
- Get a useful snapshot of the organisations progress.

- Look at areas of improvement.

8.7 Bromley Equality Partnership Group

The Bromley Equality Partnership Group comprises of multi-agency partners and stakeholders within the London Borough of Bromley, with a shared vision of creating a strong, sustainable and cohesive community in Bromley, working collaboratively by pooling resources, providing expertise and developing strategies to review and address borough-wide equality and diversity challenges.

The Group carries out its responsibilities and duties through providing strategic direction, raising awareness, promoting and upholding equality, diversity and inclusion across the borough.

9. Development of the 2024-2030 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

The commitments set out in our previous strategy, the Single Equality Scheme, and the progress/final positioning on our 2020-2024 EDI Objectives (which can access [here](#)), have been used in the development of this EDI Strategy, in order to ensure continuity of existing good practice.

The College conducts regular reviews and analyses of the profiles of both students and staff, as well as student achievement and retention rates, yearly audits on the Gender Pay Gap, and frequent meetings throughout the year with various Stakeholders that are key in implementing and furthering our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion work, including our SLT Sponsors, EDI Champions and Staff Network Groups. The information gathered across these events has also been used to develop the new EDI objectives for 2024-2030.

The current Terms of Reference for London South East Colleges' Equality and Diversity Steering Group, which was created to define the purpose and membership of the group can be found [here](#).

10. Our Context

As we have grown as an organisation, the College now has campuses across 4 boroughs, Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich and Lambeth. This puts us at the heart of a widely diverse community, attracting staff and students from a wide variety of backgrounds. This presents both opportunities and challenges for the College in providing inclusive and accessible services for all. As an important part of the community, the College recognises the need for social and economic development and intends to have the greatest possible positive impact on the surrounding areas. Knowing our communities is crucial - understanding the histories, ambitions and obstacles our current and potential students and staff face is vital to providing the best possible service.

Above all, the College aims to prepare every student for their next step, whether that is continuing in education or joining the workforce, by delivering the skills and knowledge needed. From demographic data, the need for ESOL, SEND, vocational and return to work courses is clear and the College is proud to provide these. Although the five boroughs in which the College has campuses, and from which the majority of students come, have unique demographics, students from every campus face the challenges and opportunities of living and working in London and the southeast.

The College also plays an important role in these areas as an employer. Our staff body is very diverse and comes from a broad geographical area. The College aims to ensure that our staff profile reflects that of our communities and that we have qualified staff from a range of backgrounds in order to drive the college to be the best it can be as well as to provide positive role models for all students and members of the wider community.

The table below uses data across all five of our boroughs from the Office for National Statistics Census in 2021, showing just how diverse our local communities are.

	Bexley	Bromley	Greenwich	Lambeth	All 4 Boroughs
Total Population	246,473	329,992	289,067	317,654	1,183,186
16+ and Unemployed	3.7%	3.5%	4.8%	4.8%	4.2%
Born Overseas	21.0%	20.3%	37.5%	38.6%	29.6%
Largest Migrant Populations	Nigeria	India	Nigeria	All South America	Nigeria
	India	Other EU	Other South Asia	Jamaica	All South America
	Other EU	Other Europe	India	Portugal	India
English Main Language	87.2%	88.8%	78.5%	79.7%	83.5%

Largest Main Language that is not English	Romanian	Portuguese	Nepalese	Spanish	Spanish
	Panjabi	Polish	Romanian	Portuguese	Portuguese
	Polish	Romanian	Spanish	Italian	Romanian
Aged 16+ and no GCSE's	18.2%	13.8%	16.7%	13.1%	15.2%
Homeowners	68.6%	68.5%	41.1%	33.0%	52.1%
Has bad/very bad health	4.3%	3.8%	4.6%	4.0%	4.2%

We have also used the 2021 Census Data to compare the local population profile to our Staff Profile from May 2024.

The table below shows our staff profile for Gender, Age, and Ethnic Group, Disability, Sexual Orientation and Religious Belief, compared to each of the five boroughs, and the total population of the five boroughs. (Bar charts displaying this data for more visual purposes can be found in **Appendix 1**).

From this information, we can see that we currently have a more diverse staff profile compared to our boroughs for Ethnic Grouping, and closely replicate the borough profiles in terms of Disability, Sexual Orientation and Religious Belief. However, we do have a larger gender split, with 66.4% of our staff identifying as female, and an older staff profile, with over two thirds of our staff falling into either the 45-54 or 55+ age brackets.

		Bexley	Bromley	Greenwich	Lambeth	All 4 Boroughs	Staff Profile May 2024
Sex	Female	51.9%	52.0%	51.4%	51.5%	51.7%	66.3%
	Male	48.1%	48.0%	48.6%	48.5%	48.3%	33.7%
Age Group *	16 – 25	16.8%	14.4%	17.2%	19.2%	17.0%	4.8%
	26 – 34	17.8%	17.1%	23.1%	29.2%	22.3%	11.7%
	35 – 44	21.3%	22.8%	23.5%	19.6%	21.7%	17.0%
	45 – 54	20.4%	21.8%	18.6%	16.4%	19.1%	27.2%
	55+	23.7%	23.9%	17.6%	15.6%	19.8%	39.3%
Ethnic Group	Asian	9.9%	8.3%	13.2%	7.3%	9.5%	10.0%
	Black	12.2%	7.6%	21.0%	24.0%	16.2%	19.3%
	Mixed	3.5%	5.4%	6.0%	8.1%	5.9%	4.6%
	Other	2.5%	2.3%	4.2%	5.7%	3.7%	1.4%
	White	71.9%	76.5%	55.7%	55.0%	64.7%	60.9%
Disability	Disabled	14.6%	13.9%	14.4%	13.2%	14.0%	10.4%
	Not Disabled	85.4%	86.1%	85.6%	86.6%	86.0%	74.8%
Sexual Orientation	LGBQ+	2.1%	2.7%	4.5%	8.3%	4.6%	4.0%
	Heterosexual	90.9%	90.0%	86.9%	82.7%	87.4%	78.8%
	Unknown	7.0%	7.3%	8.6%	9.1%	8.0%	17.2%
Religious Belief	Christian	50.3%	48.3%	44.7%	43.7%	46.6%	43.6%
	Hindu	3.0%	2.9%	4.0%	1.0%	2.7%	2.3%
	Muslim	3.9%	3.3%	8.5%	8.1%	6.0%	3.3%
	No Faith	33.6%	37.3%	32.6%	37.5%	35.4%	16.5%
	Other	3.5%	1.8%	3.7%	2.1%	2.7%	8.1%
	Unknown	5.7%	6.4%	6.5%	7.6%	6.6%	26.2%

* For the boroughs, the 55+ age category covers the ages 55 – 68, so that it caps at the retirement age.

11. LSEC EDI Profile Data

To develop meaningful objectives, it is important to have an accurate and comprehensive dataset for staff and students. As part of the development of the new equality objectives, the sensitive personal data collected for staff was changed to match that collected for students. This allows the College to analyse and compare the staff profile against the student profile and will assist with, for example, recruitment so that the College can be reflective of the local communities we serve.

We have also tried to match the data collected during the 2021 Census, to simplify the process of comparing our staff profile against the local population we serve, whilst also following guidance from Stonewall with regards to obtaining data on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Sex and Trans Status.

11.1 Staff

An analysis of Staff Personal Sensitive Data, held on our HR system, is undertaken regularly to compile a profile of the staff body by protected characteristics. Staff are encouraged to update their Personal Sensitive Data on the system and are given guidance explaining the reasons behind collecting this data. The data analysed includes:

- Age
- Gender Identity
- Ethnic Group
- Ethnic Origin
- Disability Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Religious Belief

The staff data is analysed as a whole and by employee group (teaching and learning staff, business support staff and management) - see **Appendix 1**. We have also conducted an in-depth departmental analysis and have compared our Staff Profile data with the most recent data from our home boroughs, as seen in **Section 7** and **Appendix 1**.

Looking at our all-staff profile, we can see that 66.3% of our staff are female (approximately 2/3) and 33.5% are male. This data also shows that 66.5% of our staff fall into either the 45-54 or 55+ age bracket, with this percentage increasing across Management levels.

Our Ethnicity profile and diversity has increased since 2021, with 65.9% of our staff being White British/White other, and 35.3% being either Asian/Asian British, Black/Black British, Mixed Ethnic Groups or Other. Our overall staff ethnicity profile is more diverse than the average for our boroughs (Bromley, Bexley and Greenwich), as also seen in **Section 7** and **Appendix 1**.

With regards to staff disclosure of sensitive information, approximately 73.8% of staff have disclosed their Religious Beliefs, 82.2% have disclosed their Sexual Orientation and 85.2% have disclosed whether they have a Learning Difficulty/Disability or not, with 10.4% disclosing that they do. These disclosure rates have seen a large increase since Spring 2021.

11.2 Students

The charts numbered 2 to 7 in **Appendix 2** are representative of the 2023/2024 student profile. Students are asked at enrolment to provide information on their age, race, sex, whether they had a learning difficulty or disability, religious belief/faith, and sexual orientation.

Prior to answering questions, it was explained to students that data was collected principally to meet government funding requirements and to enable the college to monitor recruitment, progress and achievement rates of different groups of students. Some questions also provide a "prefer not to say" option if needed.

Chart 1 in **Appendix 2** gives a breakdown of the Home Boroughs of our students, allowing us to see where they are travelling from, and how this may affect the Student Profile by comparing our Profile Data to that of Bromley, Bexley, Greenwich and Lambeth. 21% of our travel from Bromley, 13.8% travel from Bexley, 13.3% travel from Greenwich, 11.3% travel from Lewisham, 5.1% travel from Croydon, 0.6% travel from Lambeth and 34.8% travel from other boroughs.

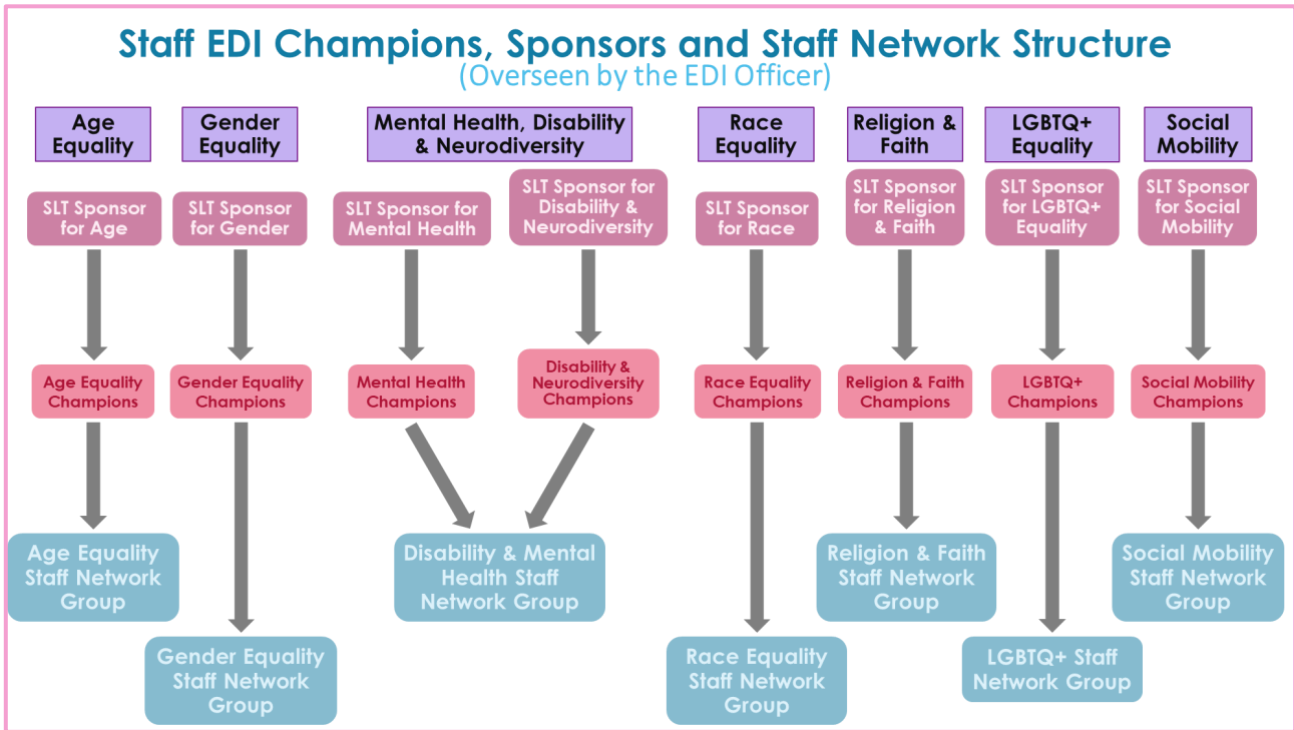
12. Implementation of our EDI Objectives

12.1 Equality Champions, Sponsors and Staff Network Groups

The College has implemented a champion and sponsor Model in which each of the protected characteristics is represented by a member of staff and a Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Sponsor. These Equality Champions and Sponsors are volunteers who either have some personal experience and/or expertise in dealing with issues affecting individuals with that characteristic.

Champions are expected to identify common concerns and contribute to the development of positive relationships across College communities. They are also given the responsibility of running, developing and promoting the EDI Staff Network Groups. Sponsors meet with champions regularly to keep them informed of strategic developments and ensure that their issues and ideas are discussed at Senior Leadership Meetings, when appropriate.

See the flow chart below for a visual representation of the EDI Champion, Sponsor and Staff Network Group structure.



12.2 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan

The College has a clear implementation plan to achieve the objectives with specific actions and deadlines, with all actions assigned to the individual/s or team/s responsible for completing them. The action plan's progress is co-ordinated and tracked by the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, the Group Chief People Officer and is monitored by the Group Executive Team, The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, the EDI Grants Committee and the Board of Governors.

12.3 SAR and Quality Process

The main means of quality assurance and improvement is the process of self-assessment. All areas of the College take part annually through assessing their work against the criteria set out in the OFSTED Common Inspection Framework or QAA Quality Code for higher education provision. This includes analysing the performance and any achievement gaps for different groups of learners as well as assessing how well the College promotes all forms of equality and diversity and protects students and staff from harassment, bullying and discrimination. Quality Improvement Action plans are agreed, which address equality and diversity gaps and objectives, and monitored routinely by senior managers and the Group and the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Steering Group.

12.4 Learner Involvement, Voice, Enrichment (LIVE) Strategy

The College's LIVE team will continue to offer a varied programme of enrichment activities, engage a diverse pool of learners in Learner Involvement roles such as Student Ambassadors and to elicit the views of all students, particularly the underrepresented, to inform the development of services. The College will work with the Student Councils at each campus and the overarching Students' Union to elicit feedback from students as well as involving them in achieving actions set.

12.5 Staff Forums

The College holds termly staff forums at each campus, the Chair of each local forum then attends the LSEC staff forum where they have the opportunity to bring forward any concerns or ideas at a

College level. The staff forums are also an opportunity for staff not represented by the trade unions to raise their concerns and ideas in a supportive environment.

12.6 Action Plan Responsibility, Accountability and Publishing Progress

Responsibility for the monitoring of the Action Plan and achievement of equality objectives lies with the Equality and Diversity Steering Group. The steering group reports to the Senior Executive Team Group and through that group, to the Curriculum and Quality Committee with an annual report sent to the Corporation. Equality information required under the Public Sector Equality Duty is published each year by the college and will include progress on achieving equality objectives. The publication of this information is overseen by the Steering Group. This group includes members of the Senior Leadership Team, representatives from the Students' Union, members of the teaching staff and the Lead Governor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The group is chaired by the Group Chief People Officer.

Staff Network Groups have been established to work on specific aspects of equality and diversity and/or protected characteristic groups e.g. the LGBT+ Staff Network Group or the Gender Equality Staff Network Group. Members for Staff Network Groups are drawn from across the College and may also be drawn from a specific area according to need and the specific purpose of the Network Group. The group is led by the EDI Champions and SLT Sponsor affiliated with that group. The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer supports task groups in completing their actions.

12.7 Data Analysis

Staff and Student data is collected and interrogated to locate any equality gaps in both profiles and to track the progression of different groups of staff and students. The results of this analysis are reported to senior leaders and governors and used to inform actions taken by the College to continue to advance equality and diversity in all aspects of college life.

An Analysis of our Staff and Student Data can be found in **Section 8**, and the related data can be found in **Appendices 1, 2 and 3**.

12.8 Tackling Inequality Grant Scheme

The Grant Programme was established to reduce race inequality that has been born from the unprecedented times of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and the social and economic impact the virus has presented to Black, Asian and minority ethnic group communities nationally and internationally. Inequalities presenting during this time have highlighted equality gaps that we will seek to bridge and close through these projects.

However, by its nature, the Grant Programme Fund cannot be exclusive. Although applications that focus on racial inequality have initially been prioritized, particularly for projects submitted in 2020, grants will be offered to projects that reduce inequality and promote diversity for all protected characteristics as we strive towards the goal of reducing inequality for all groups within our Group and wider community.

Central to our Group Vision is also supporting the social and economic well-being of our local communities, through positioning ourselves as a social enterprise. We have a greater responsibility than ever before to provide social value and play our role as an anchor institution within our London Boroughs. Therefore, we are looking for projects that not only support staff or students within the Group but help to reduce systemic inequalities within the community as well.

13. Glossary

Term	Definition
Age	A protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. It is unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their age. This refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 years old) or range of ages (e.g. 18-30 years old).
Ally	A term for people who advocate for individuals from underrepresented or marginalized groups in a society.
Assigned Sex at Birth	The biological sex you were identified as at birth (male/female). However, this has a different meaning for intersex people as they may have biological features that do not sit within the binary 'norm', or biological attributes of both sexes, doctors will often assign them the sex they think they align more with physically.

Bias	A prejudice in favour of or against one person, or group compared with another usually in a way that's considered to be unfair.
Disability	A protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. It is unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their disability. Disabilities are any physical or mental impairments that have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out their normal day-to-day activities.
Direct Discrimination	This occurs when a person treats another less favourably than they treat, or would treat, others because of a protected characteristic.
Discrimination by Association	A form of direct discrimination that occurs due to someone's association with another person who has a protected characteristic. It may also occur because someone has campaigned to help people with a particular characteristic or has refused to act in a way that would disadvantage a person or group who have a particular characteristic.
Discrimination by Perception	A form of direct discrimination that occurs when someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic they are mistakenly thought to have.
Ethnicity / Ethnic Origin	Ethnicity, or Ethnic Group, is a way to divide people into smaller social groups based on characteristics like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage • Language • Political and economic interests • Ancestral geographical base.
Faiths and Beliefs	A protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. It is unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their faith/belief. Faiths and beliefs include religious, philosophical and political beliefs as well as lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect a person's life choices or the way they live to be included in this definition.
Gender Identity	Someone's sense of themselves as being a boy/man, girl/woman, both or neither. It is often described as a spectrum, with many different identities.
Gender Neutral	Often refers to places/objects or words that are not gender-specific or can be used by anyone regardless of gender. So, for example, gender neutral pronouns such as They/Them, or places like Gender Neutral toilets or changing rooms. Having gender-neutral facilities, clothes, pronouns etc makes things more accessible for people that do not identify as cisgender/the sex they were assigned at birth.
Gender Reassignment	Gender reassignment is a characteristic that is protected by the Equality act 2010, and it is further interpreted in the Equality act 2010 approved code of practice. It is a term of much contention.
Harassment	Unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic, or of a sexual nature, that has the purpose, or effect, of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
Hate Crime	An act by any person or group against the person or property of another which constitutes an expression of hostility because of race, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, gender, or ethnicity.
Indirect Discrimination	This occurs when applying a provision, criterion, or practice, which puts someone from a particular group having one, or more protected characteristics at a particular disadvantage. Indirect discrimination may only be justified in exceptional circumstances if it can be shown that the action was reasonable in managing the business or organisation.
Intersectionality	Every minority group has experienced one form of discrimination/stigma because of their identity. Whether due to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, there are many experiences that can be shared. Intersectionality looks at this crossover, and the similarities between the forms/reasons for discrimination, and how being a part of multiple minority groups can have an additional effect.

Lawful Discrimination	The Equality Act sets out exceptions & specific circumstances where public bodies/ organisations may lawfully discriminate against individuals or groups with protected characteristics. For example, a women’s refuge may seek women only to support worker roles in this environment, or similarly, a male minister of religion may be appointed, such as a Catholic priest.
LGBTQ+	An acronym used to describe people of all minority Sexual/ Romantic Orientations and gender identities, including but not limited to: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Transgender, Non-Binary, Queer, Asexual and Intersex. There are many different versions and varieties of this acronym.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It is unlawful to discriminate against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership. Marriage is a union between a man and a woman, or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can have their relationship legally recognised as a 'civil partnership'.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It is unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity. Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby, while maternity is the period after the birth of a baby that is linked to maternity leave. Women are protected from discrimination up to 26 weeks after giving birth and are protected from less favourable treatment due to breastfeeding.
Race	A protected Characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. It is unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their race. The term refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.
Religion/Belief	Religion has the meaning traditionally given to it, whereas belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.
Sex	A categorisation of male/female based on physical, hormonal or genetic characteristics. Usually assumed to be binary.
Sexual Harassment	This occurs when a person engages in unwanted conduct, which is of a sexual nature. This may be verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct.
Sexual Orientation	A protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. It refers to who you are sexually attracted to and want to have sexual relationships with, and it is unlawful to discriminate against someone because of their sexual orientation.
Social Mobility	Social mobility refers to change in a person's socio-economic situation, either in relation to their parents (inter-generational mobility) or throughout their lifetime (intra-generational mobility).
Transgender	A person whose gender history, identity or expression does not fit what others assigned them at birth or what others think men and women 'should' be like. Some undergo a process of medical, surgical and/or hormonal transition. Some do not, for many different reasons.
Transitioning	A process of social, legal and/or medical change including to physical appearance, clothing and social relationships.
Victimisation	This occurs when an individual is subjected to detriment because they have done, are believed to have done or it is believed they will do a “protected act”.

14. Acknowledgements

UK Census 2021 for demographic data of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich and Lambeth

Black FE Leaders Group – 10 point plan

Investors in Ethnicity – Maturity Matrix

Stonewall – Diversity Champions Programme & Workplace Equality Index

Other relevant policies

- Trans Equality Policy
- Family Friendly Policy
- Health and Wellbeing at Work Policy
- LAC Policy
- Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy
- LSEC Safeguarding Policy
- Menopause Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Dignity at Work Policy