

AGE EQUALITY POLICY STATEMENT

1 Context

This policy statement sets out how Doncaster College will work towards the promotion of age equality in all of its activities. It outlines how the College will ensure that age discrimination is challenged and eliminated through legislation and good practice.

This policy statement needs to be viewed in the context of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, and the extent of protection it provides in the context of age equality - a protected characteristic.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the College's:

- Equality and Diversity Strategy
- Anti Harassment and Anti Bullying Policy (Staff and Students)
- Widening Participation Strategy
- Equality and Diversity Framework: An Ethical Framework
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Strategic Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2011-14
- Equality and Diversity Framework: Charter for Staff.

2 Definition

The Equality Act 2010 makes discrimination on the grounds of age unlawful in employment, education and training.

Age related discrimination generally consists of unequal treatment against people based on their chronological age. This can include unfair treatment linked to a specific age or within an age range. It can also include categories such as 'old', 'young' or the perceived age of a person that someone may be associated with, for example, the carer of an older person.

The Office for National Statistics, in its latest projections, indicates that nearly a third of the workforce will be over 50 by 2020. 29% of adults have reported experience of age related discrimination. This makes age discrimination the most prevalent form of discrimination in society today. There are some 890,000 people over 50 currently out of work who are actively seeking employment, but who are prevented from gaining employment by negative age related views held in society.

Age equality means securing equality of participation in our society for people of every age. We need to ensure the correct balance between equal citizenship, equality of outcome, equality of opportunity and respect for difference.

Age discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably for a reason relating to his or her age and that treatment is not justified on the basis of the requirement of the role.

Equality means ensuring that everyone is treated equally i.e. in the case of learners, that all students have the same right of access to resources. Consequently to ensure equality of opportunity, individuals / groups may be treated differently.

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Diversity is recognising that individuals and groups of people are different and that it is important to value and celebrate difference.

Direct Discrimination is treating someone less favourably than they would treat others because of a protected characteristic.

[The individual does not need to possess the protected characteristic.]

Indirect Discrimination is where an employer/provider has a condition, rule, policy or practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who have a protected characteristic. [It can be justified if it is proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim]

Associative Discrimination is directed discrimination against someone who associates with another person that possesses a protected characteristic.

Perspective Discrimination is direct discrimination against some one because they are thought (wrongly) to possess a protected characteristic.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating an employee's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Victimisation is where an individual is subjected to a detriment because they make, or are suspected of making, or supporting a complaint or grievance under the Equality Act 2010. [No protection if a complaint has been maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint].

Third Party Discrimination protects employees who are harassed by clients, contractors of the employer/provider. An employer is liable if the conduct has occurred on at two previous occasions, is aware it had taken place and had not taken reasonable steps to prevent it occurring again.

3 Guiding Principles

Doncaster College wishes to be recognised by the community as an organisation which provides good employment and educational opportunities for people of different ages and we wish individuals who apply to us as a student or employee to know that they will receive fair treatment and be treated solely on their ability.

Therefore our policies aim to ensure that people of different ages receive treatment that is fair, equitable and consistent with their skills and abilities.

Doncaster College is fully committed to promoting equality of opportunity in all ages. All people have a right to equality of opportunity irrespective of their age.

Our strategies and overarching frameworks and practices are reviewed and impact assessed regularly to ensure they provide equality of opportunity through compliance with current legislation, good practice guidance and user feedback, with targets set for improvement through our Strategic Equality and Diversity Action Plan.

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Wherever possible the College will use Association of Colleges (AoC) good practice guidelines.

Doncaster College does not tolerate any prejudicial behaviour by any member of the College. The College has a zero tolerance to bullying, harassment and victimisation.

The College recognises that society has negative attitudes, myths and stereotypes about ageing, youth, older and younger persons. These negative attitudes and beliefs can lead to both younger and older people being economically and socially disadvantaged, marginalised and excluded.

4 Legislative Framework

The College will operate within the legislative framework of the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty 2011 and strive, where possible to go beyond legal compliance.

Within the Strategic Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2011-14 the College will take action to:

- Eliminate discrimination based upon age that is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010
- Promote equality between people of different ages
- Eliminate harassment of people of different ages that is related to their age
- Promote positive attitudes towards people of different ages
- Encourage the participation of people of different ages in public life.

There is recognition that there is legal protection afforded to the protected characteristic of age equality.

The College is committed to ensure that it does not discriminate either directly or indirectly in the provision of goods, facilities, services or employment on the grounds of age equality.

Consequently, the College will not tolerate any forms of discrimination on the basis of age equality based upon:

- Direct Discrimination
- Indirect Discrimination
- Associative Discrimination
- Perceptive Discrimination
- Indirect Discrimination
- Harassment
- Third Party Harassment
- Victimisation.

The College recognises that the legislation makes it unlawful on the grounds of age to discriminate on the basis of:

- A person's actual age
- A age that they are thought to have; or
- An age of someone else with whom they are associated.

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The College recognises that the Equality Act 2010 prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of age and extends protection in relation to associative, perceptive and third party harassment.

In relation to indirect and direct discrimination on the grounds of age and in line with the Equality Act 2010 the College recognises that it is capable of being justified if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

The College supports good decision making by encouraging staff to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that our policies and services are appropriate and acceptable to all and meet different people's needs.