

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for Learners

B1: INFORMATION TO STUDENTS

Version History

Version	Date	Description/Status	Originator
1	November 2023	New Document	Joint FE Policy Committee

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Introduction

Dún Laoghaire Further Education Institute (DFEi), as a constituent of Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB), is committed to fostering an inclusive culture that promotes equality and equity, values diversity, and maintains a learning, working, and social environment in which the rights and dignity of learners, staff, and stakeholders are respected. DFEi recognises that an inclusive and supportive environment of dignity and respect will enable staff and learners to flourish and develop to their full potential.

DFEi will endeavour to ensure equality and equity of access, opportunity and experience for learners by ensuring its procedures in relation to admission, delivery of education and related supports, assessment, progression and awards do not discriminate directly or indirectly against any learner on the specified statutory grounds of *gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community*.

All contact with learners, staff and stakeholders shall be conducted in a courteous and professional manner consistent with an environment of dignity and respect.

This policy is informed by equality, equal status and disability legislation and is supported by relevant policies and guidelines, including DDLETB's Equal Opportunities Policy, DFEi's Admissions Policy, Code of Conduct Policy, Anti-bullying Policy for Learners as well as the ETB Complaint Procedure and the SOLAS Fund for Students with Disabilities Guidelines.

Definitions

Equality is the principle by which individuals should be treated equally, fairly, with dignity and free from discrimination. **Equity** considers the presence of privilege as well as the presence of restricted opportunity and recognises that there may be occasions (for example, in the case of a disability) where an unequal effort is required to ensure the principle of equality is met.

Diversity is the principle of understanding, appreciating and embracing differences and practicing mutual respect for qualities and experiences that are different from the majority.

Inclusion is a sense of belonging, feeling respected and valued, feeling a level of support and commitment from others so that one can achieve their best.

Statement of Commitment

DFEi is committed to:

- Treating all members of the College community with dignity and respect and to challenging inappropriate behaviour or discrimination.
- Promoting the principles of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion across all college activities and academic practices.
- Increasing awareness of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion and promoting a positive teaching, learning, working and social environment.
- Identifying barriers to equality, equity, diversity, inclusion and full participation and redressing, as far as practicable, any identified imbalances in practice.
- Developing policies, procedures and practices incorporating the principles of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion and which prevent discrimination on the specified statutory grounds.
- Providing reasonable accommodation to learners with disabilities and additional educational needs.
- Accepting zero tolerance of harassment or bullying of learners, staff or other members of the College community.
- Promoting and supporting inclusive principles within teaching and assessment practices, particularly through the application of the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- Promoting staff participation in continuous professional development across all equality, equity, diversity and inclusion matters.
- Promoting positive relationships and behaviour among learners, staff and other members of the College community.
- Responding to and actively seeking to resolve equality and discrimination complaints.

Support

Where learners perceive that they have been unfairly treated or the conduct of an individual is in contravention of this policy, information and support is available from Course Coordinators, Department Heads, the Guidance Counsellor, the Deputy Principal and the Principal.

Policy Breaches

Issues in relation to equality, equity, diversity and inclusion will be addressed under the relevant procedure, where applicable. Issues which fall across more than one procedure will be dealt with as flexibly, fairly and proportionately as possible.