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MISSION STATEMENT: WHERE GREAT FUTURES BEGIN AND EVERY LEARNER MATTERS

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1. OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES

Our Vision is

Telford College of Arts & Technology (TCAT) aims to create and maintain an inclusive College community where:

- People are treated with dignity and respect
- Inequalities are challenged, and
- We anticipate, and respond positively to, different needs and circumstances to ensure everyone can achieve their potential

Our Priorities are

TCAT is a place where:

- All who learn and work here have the opportunity to participate fully and achieve their full potential
- Physical, social and economic barriers to access are minimised
- The environment is welcoming and supportive
- Teaching, learning and assessment are the key to our success
- We all accept our responsibility to uphold equality and show fairness, courtesy and respect to others
- We involve and consult widely on equality, diversity and inclusion matters
- We measure the impact of the College activity relating to equality and diversity and report on progress annually
- Frequently reviewed action plans are used to set realistic targets; drive improvement and manage performance.

2. OUR LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of various protected characteristics. This means we cannot discriminate against students, staff or visitors or treat them less favourably because of their:

- Age
- Sex (gender)
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership

The College's priorities, plans, objectives and activities support the College's ongoing focus on meeting its duties under this act to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

3. THE CONTEXT OF OUR POLICY

This section sets out our mission, values and commitment to equality and diversity together with the social and demographic factors which impact on our equality and diversity objectives.

Our Mission:

“WHERE GREAT FUTURES BEGIN AND EVERY STUDENT MATTERS”

Our mission and our commitment to equality and diversity are intrinsically linked: great futures will begin where everyone is achieving their potential.

About the College

We are a large provider of vocational education and training serving the region of Telford and Wrekin. We provide a comprehensive range of opportunities from entry to degree level for the diverse communities in Telford and Wrekin.

We operate from a single campus in Wellington but also provide extensive provision in community venues and on employers' premises.

We have a substantial Employer Responsive provision where more than half of College business is providing education and training for adults.

We have a growing expertise in meeting the requirements of high needs Students and opened a bespoke unit in September 2015 enhancing this provision further. The College has also seen an increasing demand for Higher Education; this is strengthened by the University Centre Telford partnership located in Telford town centre.

We are proud of our commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for everyone linked to the life of the College. This policy has been developed to recognise the diversity of the communities we serve.

Telford College values are:

- Placing the Student at the heart of all we do
- Showing fairness, courtesy and mutual respect
- Teaching and learning as the key to our success
- Aspiring to excellence; quality is everyone's responsibility
- Working together to get the best results
- Empowering others to achieve their potential

Our Community

Telford and Wrekin is a place of socio-economic contrasts with parts of the borough amongst the most deprived nationally – comparable with inner cities – and areas amongst the least deprived nationally. A total of fifteen areas are ranked in the 10% most deprived nationally. More than a quarter of the population (27%) lives in the 20% most deprived areas nationally.

The population is becoming more diverse. As well as new migrants a key driver of change has been the younger age structure of BME groups leading to a greater likelihood of them having children. The population of Telford and Wrekin is 'younger' than the national position.

The College's catchment area is a mix of urban and rural areas within the borough of Telford and Wrekin. The direct catchment area of the College includes 14 secondary schools, of which 6 have well established sixth forms. Four wards local to the college are classed as having high levels of deprivation and the College's strategic direction has ensured continued engagement and widening participation for learners in these areas. Within the College catchment area the proportion of young people who gain five or more GCSE A*-C grades, including English and Mathematics at the end of Key Stage 4, is 51.7% which is lower than the England rate of 56.8% (source: www.telford.gov.uk/factsandfigures).

As a College we are well placed to play our part in working with the local authority and employers to set high expectations and achieve high standards for all members of our community.

We are committed to constantly evaluating the social inclusivity of our programmes and supporting Students into positive destinations such as employment or further education or training.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

What you can expect from us - how we show our commitment to our priorities

At TCAT we recognise the full value of diversity and will provide equality of opportunity for all our students and staff by:

- Actively promoting equality by valuing and respecting differences between people.
- Ensuring staff are equipped to recognise diversity and challenge discrimination.
- Investigating all allegations of discrimination sensitively.
- Monitoring the curriculum and learning to ensure they are free from discrimination and respond to the needs of the wider community.
- Monitor policies, procedures and practices to ensure they are free from discrimination and respond to the needs of the wider community.

- Face up to the challenge of improving year on year as an organisation with a strong track record in equality and one which listens to and values all its students and staff.
- Aspire to excellence and ensure that quality and equality are the responsibility of all of us who learn and work here.

So, whatever your age, background, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, whether you are married or in a civil partnership, pregnant or on maternity leave, transitioning from one gender to another we want you to feel completely confident that you can fulfil your potential.

What we expect from you

We all have a responsibility to ensure that, as a minimum, we meet our legal duties in terms of equality. However we have specific expectations in terms of:

Our Staff – we expect all our staff (whether managing staff, teaching, supporting, advising, challenging or developing students) to be ambassadors for the college. This includes challenging discrimination and stereotyping; keeping up to date with legislation; participating in training; and ensuring that in all their dealings with other colleagues, students and visitors they behave professionally and in a way that encourages inclusion and promotes equality.

Our Executive Team and Senior Managers – we expect our senior managers to lead by example and live the College values ensuring that information is used to identify imbalances between different groups and that equality plans are implemented. It is key to our success that our leaders and managers are seen to provide an exemplary model of good practice in eliminating discrimination, bullying and harassment and advancing equality and promoting good relations.

Our Governors - we expect our Governors to ensure that the policy is implemented and that it complies with statutory requirements. Their role is to challenge our approach to equality to ensure that it is robust; and to behave at all times in a way that reflects our values. A key role is also to champion and promote an inclusive environment and ensure that progress is being made against our equality objectives.

Our Students – we expect our students to be considerate of others during their time at the College. Fellow students, staff and visitors should be valued and treated with respect as outlined in the Student Charter and the Student Behaviour Policy.

A key part of the student experience is to collaborate with a diverse range of people. This will provide invaluable understanding of others' culture, background, outlook and experiences in readiness for the world of work.

Our Visitors, Partners, Contractors and other External Stakeholders – we expect everyone who works with us or engages with our community to behave in a way that reflects the values and ethos outlined in this document.

Our legal responsibilities for equality cover everyone who interacts with us and we expect the highest standards of behaviour from all our stakeholders. As a minimum we expect everyone to

- **Ensure that they comply with statutory requirements and with this Policy**
- **Behave in a way that promotes a welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone**
- **Treat each other with dignity and respect at all times**

5. Equality and Diversity in Practice – how we achieve our priorities

There are a number of ways in which we ensure that equality and diversity underpin our day to day activities and ensure we work towards achieving our priorities including the following:

Policies - having a number of policies that describe in detail the expectations outlined on the previous page, for example, the Citizenship Code, Student Behaviour Policy, Staff Codes of Conduct, Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Working Group – we have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group chaired by the Director of Human Resources and Head of Student Services made up of Directors, managers, staff and Students. Reference will be made to outside organisations and support as considered necessary. The Working Group reports to the Senior Leadership Team.

College Equality Objectives - developing College Equality Objectives. Our equality objectives demonstrate our commitment to achieving significant positive change. We expect the achievement of these objectives to result in meaningful improvements for all staff and students. In addition to these benefits, the development and publication of these objectives helps us to fulfil our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Achievement Gaps - monitoring student achievement gaps and developing action plans to address these gaps. These plans embed equality and diversity at a school level and ensure that every school contributes effectively to progressing equality.

Equality Analysis - carrying out an Equality Analysis as part of our policy development and planning. This approach should improve the way we make decisions and improve the service that we provide to our customers. It will also help us to meet our legal duties by showing that we have paid due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when developing and implementing changes to strategy, policy and practice.

Monitoring - monitoring equality as part of performance monitoring and self-assessment to ensure that progress is being made against identified actions.

Celebration - celebrating our diverse community and commemorating important equality events through a range of activities such as activities to raise awareness during religious festivals, Black History Month, Disability History Month, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans History Month and IDAHO (International day Against Homophobia).

Support - Supporting initiatives such as the Frank Buttle Trust and Two Tick Symbol to promote equality and benchmark our progress.

Training - ensuring that staff and students are have the knowledge and understanding to comply with the Policy. by providing training for staff and students on a wide range of equality issues, such as discrimination, various aspects of disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, transgender, age, gender and race.

Consultation – the college has a Student involvement strategy which ensures Students have opportunity to share their views in a variety of ways such as student focus groups, student council, class representative meetings, Principal question time, Heads of School question time and Director question time. Equality and diversity will feature as a standing agenda item at all course representative meetings. The College believes that effective involvement of Students in the College’s activities will have a positive impact on Student achievement, employability and citizenship. Involvement of Students will also raise the quality of the College’s provision for Students, customers and potential Students.

There are a variety of staff from across the college who sit on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee which enables staff to influence policy and direction or provide feedback on proposed plans and initiatives.

Promotion - the student induction and enrichment programme will include information and activities which make the College’s commitments under this policy very clear and help to raise Students’ general awareness and understanding.

Learning in the workplace - the College has a role in promoting good practice in equality and diversity in the workplace. Work-place assessors monitor equality and diversity through progress reviews and meetings with Students and employers/workplace supervisors. The College expects that an employer with a work-based Student will have an equality and diversity policy or formally agree to comply with that of the College. The College will work alongside its partner employers to improve equality and diversity in the workplace and to eliminate discrimination.

Supporting Everyone to Fulfil Their Potential – there are a number of ways in which we support everyone to fulfil their potential, these include:

Student Services – our Student Services team provide all Students with access to the careers team, mentors and counsellors, health and well-being services and, where appropriate financial support and transport to enable access to our services.

Additional Learning Support - we work closely with the authority careers team, the local authority, and external agencies and with schools to ensure information is passed to us in a timely fashion and this information is used to support Students with high needs and any Students with additional learning needs throughout their learning journey

Progress Coaches - the Progress Coach is a key member of staff with an overview of the full study programme, working with Students on a one to one basis to ensure progress towards achievement is maintained or accelerated.

6. Monitoring Our Progress and Making Improvements

The quality of the promotion of Equality and Diversity will be assessed through SARs, internal and external verification, observation of teaching and learning and through analysis of trends in staff and student data.

Measuring progress against our School/Department action plans every three months as part of the Quarterly Business Review process.

Providing an Annual Report to Governors which will summarise progress against our College Equality Objectives.

The objectives and related action plan will be reviewed at least annually by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Senior Leadership Team and Corporation.

Monitoring trends from the equality statistics that we publish annually and review regularly.

Assessing the success of our training and events by measuring impact.

Identifying and setting actions to address any equality issues highlighted in staff and student surveys.

Identifying future actions as we monitor and evaluate our progress.