

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

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1. Equality & Diversity Policy Statement

This Policy demonstrates how Trafford and Stockport College Group (TSCG) celebrates and values the diversity of our students and employees. TCG is committed to the elimination of discrimination and promotion of equality of opportunity for all. The public sector Equality Duty is underpinned by a number of specific duties. These specific duties require TSCG to set specific and measurable equality objectives and to publish information relating to equality so that the general public may hold the organisation to account. Published information includes:

- Information on the effect of policies and practices on those who share protected characteristics.
- Evidence of analysis undertaken to establish whether policies and practices will further the General Duty.
- Details of engagement with interested parties.

At TSCG we want to ensure, through an inclusive culture, that everyone who works or learns with us reaches their full potential; in a supportive environment which is respectful and values individual difference.

TSCG aims to promote excellence in equality and diversity practice beyond statutory compliance. Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion principles impact on every area of activity and influences how TSCG operates and what it does. We will make reasonable adjustments and proportional changes to our processes and procedures to meet the needs and circumstances of individuals.

To meet our Purpose, Vision, Mission and Values we will analyse data in relation to educational performance and take positive action to improve.

TSCG will increase access and participation to learning and employment for specific groups and underrepresented groups in our community to close equality gaps.

We will treat everyone fairly and with respect and strongly oppose and eliminate unfair discrimination, bullying, harassment and prejudice. We will ensure policies, procedures, practices and services are fit for purpose, are regularly reviewed and assessed for impact and inclusivity.

TSCG will regularly review workforce diversity and take action where appropriate, using a variety of methods, to attract and retain employees from all backgrounds at all levels of the organisation. We will ensure individual selection for employment and promotion is based on aptitude, ability and skills making reasonable adjustments for employees with specific needs.

Approval Declaration:

Signed:



Principal & Chief Executive Officer: James Scott

Date: 14 May 2025

Signed:



Chairperson of the Corporation: Graham Luccock

Date: 14 May 2025

2. TSCG Purpose, Vision, Mission and Values

Purpose

Unlocking potential for successful futures.

Vision

Lead the way for a city region where everyone has the education and skills to succeed in life and work.

Mission

Together we elevate skills, shape futures and transform lives.

Values

- Ambitious
- Collaborative
- Inclusive
- Resilient
- Respectful

3. Scope

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy provides a framework and the overarching principles for the development and promotion of an environment that is accessible to all and that promotes equality of opportunity. TSCG is committed to delivering equality of opportunity to eliminate all forms of unfair and illegal discrimination as well as all forms of harassment, bullying and victimisation.

This Policy applies to all those who come into contact with and work for TSCG including staff, governors, students, applicants for employment and for learning and other individuals who are affected by the services delivered by TSCG.

TSCG is committed to delivering equality of opportunity for all employees, students and visitors.

4. Policy Objectives

TSCG aims to be:

- Open and available to all sections of the community and maintains a reputation as a provider in whose activities all individuals, staff or students are encouraged to fully participate.
- Diverse, where individual differences are respected and where employees and students are treated on their merits and where everyone has a fair opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- Inclusive, values driven organisation, with EDI at the heart of the organisational culture and where everyone feels included and has a voice.
- Mindful of legal responsibilities and therefore:
 - Aims to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation by ensuring that equality and diversity principles are embedded into all provisions, services and procedures.
 - Advances equality of opportunity between people that share protected characteristics by removing or minimising disadvantages, making reasonable adjustments, responding to individual needs and by encouraging participation in public life.
 - Fosters good relations between people who share protected characteristics by consolidating effective partnerships with key stakeholders.

- Ensures that all suppliers/contractors working on behalf of TSCG follow Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy principles.
- Pays due regard when making decisions or taking actions, assessing the impact or implications and making reasonable adjustments for people with protected characteristics.
- Monitors equality and diversity in the recruitment of employees and ensures that CPD is inclusive and includes equality issues both directly and indirectly.
- Publishes data annually so that others can judge TSCG's effectiveness in meeting duties.
- Develops and publishes specific and measurable equality objectives.

5. Defining Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Equality

At TSCG we believe equality is about ensuring fairness where individuals or groups of people are not treated less favourably, and where everyone can participate and have the opportunity to fulfill their potential.

Diversity

Diversity is about recognising the value of difference. For TSCG this will mean not just recognising but valuing all the unique characteristics that make people who they are. This includes all protected characteristics, socio-economic status, personality diversity and any other individual differences which enhance our college community.

Inclusion

For TSCG, inclusion is about creating and maintaining a culture where everyone has a voice and can be their authentic selves, feeling welcomed and valued for who they are as an individual or as a group.

6. Protected Characteristics (or protected groups):

TSCG aims to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment for reasons relating to all recognised protected characteristics (see below) covered by the Equality Act 2010.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- Sex (Gender)
- Sexual orientation

TSCG provides a service to communities that experience a broad polarisation of wealth and therefore, our EDI commitment extends to the inclusion of social/financial disadvantage and reflects the diverse personality types of individuals.

7. Types of Unlawful Discrimination

At TSCG we will regularly review our workforce diversity and act where appropriate, using a variety of methods, to attract and retain employees from all backgrounds and at all levels of the organisation. We will ensure individual selection for employment and promotion is based on aptitude, ability and skills, making reasonable adjustments for employees with specific needs.

Students will be welcomed to TSCG openly and without discrimination.

Direct Discrimination

Discrimination occurs where:

- A person is treated less favourably than someone else in comparable circumstances.
- The treatment is for a reason relating to a person's protected characteristic.
- The treatment cannot be justified.

Indirect Discrimination

This can occur when a condition, rule, policy or even a practice that applies to everyone particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if it can be demonstrated fully that the organisation acted reasonably in managing the business need, i.e. that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

Discrimination by Association

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. For example, a carer of a disabled child or adult or someone that has a gay or transsexual friend/relative.

Discrimination by Perception

This is discrimination against someone because the other person thinks or perceives they possess a particular protected characteristic. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Discrimination Arising from Disability

Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected to their disability and such treatment cannot be justified.

Discrimination arising from disability is different from direct discrimination. Discrimination arising from disability will occur if the following three conditions are met:

- A disabled person is treated unfavourably, that is putting them at a disadvantage, even if this was not the intention.
- This treatment is because of something connected with the disabled person's disability (which could be the result, effect or outcome of that disability) such as an inability to walk unaided or disability-related behaviour.
- The treatment cannot be justified by showing that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

Harassment

Harassment is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual." Employees can make a complaint against behaviour they find offensive even if the behaviour is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant protected characteristic themselves. Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

Victimisation

Victimisation can occur when an employee is being treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act, or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

Bullying

Bullying is usually persistent behaviour, directed against an individual or group, which is intimidating, offensive or malicious and which undermines the confidence and self-esteem of the individual. This is dealt with via TSCG's Harassment and Bullying Procedure.

8. Legal Framework

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is underpinned by the following legal / statutory / internal regulations:

- The Equality Act 2010 (including the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties Public and Authorities) Regulations 2017)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Modern Slavery Act 2015

As a further education college, TSCG is subject to the statutory requirements detailed s149 of the Equality Act 2010 regarding the Public Sector Equality Duty and s158 of the Equality Act 2010 concerning our positive action requirements as an employer and education provider.

9. Procedures and Protocols Supporting the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy:

- Disciplinary Procedure.
- Grievance Procedure.
- Bullying and Harassment Procedure.
- Complaints and Compliments Policy.
- Fitness to Study Procedure and Practice.
- Student Suspension Procedure.

10. Responsibilities

Governors:

- Responsible for ensuring that equality is incorporated into the strategic plan for TSCG; ensuring that due regard to equality, diversity and inclusion is given.
- Responsible for ensuring the implementation of the EDI Strategy.
- Responsible for the scrutiny of equality monitoring data, impact assessments and progress on equality objectives.
- Represented on the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

Chief People Officer:

- Has overall responsibility for equality issues.
- Leads on the development and implementation of the EDI strategy.
- Advises TSCG on its legal responsibilities.
- Chairs the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee.
- Ensures that appropriate resources are deployed to maintain TSCG's objectives associated with equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Reports to the Corporation on equality, diversity and inclusion issues.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

- Takes the strategic lead in the promotion of EDI across TSCG, making recommendations as appropriate.
- Analyses EDI data and performance.
- Ensures TCG meets its statutory responsibilities.
- Ensures an appropriate policy and procedural framework for the promotion of EDI duties.

Leaders and Managers:

- Responsible for creating a positive, inclusive culture that challenges discriminatory attitudes and behaviour amongst colleagues, employees and students.
- Aware of the legislation and TSCG's general duties in relation to the Equality Act 2010.
- Contribute to procedures and processes associated with the promotion of equality of opportunities and the fostering of good relations including marketing activities and images and materials displayed within TSCG.

Employees:

- Ensure they and their students are aware of their responsibilities associated with legislation in this area.
- Ensure that policies and procedures for which they are responsible are implemented with sensitivity to issues associated with equality, diversity and inclusion (for teachers this includes schemes of work, lesson plans, teaching resources and delivery).
- Ensure they challenge prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behaviours of colleagues, students, visitors and outside contractors as appropriate.

Students:

- Ensure they are aware of their responsibilities associated with legislation in this area.
- Do not use discriminatory language and/or behaviour.
- Challenge discriminatory language and/or behaviour as not appropriate where it is observed amongst peers.

11. Implementation and Monitoring

TSCG aims to promote excellence in equality, diversity and inclusion practice beyond statutory compliance. Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion principles impact on every area of activity and influences how TSCG operates and what it does. We will make reasonable adjustments and proportional changes to our processes and procedures to meet the needs and circumstances of individuals.

We will provide an inclusive supportive environment and promote inclusive learning where individuals are recognised and valued.

TSCG will increase access and participation to learning and employment for specific groups and under-represented groups in our community to close equality gaps.

We will treat everyone fairly and with respect and strongly oppose and eliminate unfair discrimination, bullying, harassment and prejudice.

We will ensure policies, procedures, practices and services are fit for purpose, are regularly reviewed and assessed for impact and inclusivity.

By monitoring equality, diversity and inclusion in the workforce TSCG will identify how employment procedures are working and identify areas where these may appear to be impacting disproportionately on

certain groups of employees. Employment monitoring data is collected and reported annually in relation to all protected groups apart from gender reassignment due to the sensitive confidential nature of this data.

TSCG uses student data from a variety of sources to understand the factors which may impact on student success and achievement; this includes monitoring data in relation to age, disability, race, religion and gender, performance of students, internal surveys relating to perceptions of safety, outcome of disciplinary incidents.

TSCG undertakes and publishes an annual report to reflect on its EDI performance.

TSCG reviews and publishes its gender pay gap and modern slavery reports on an annual basis.

12. Positive Duty

As an employer TSCG meets the following standards to support the delivery of our positive duty obligation: knowledge, prevention plan, organisational capability, risk management, reporting and response and monitoring and evaluation. The first four standards are directed towards prevention and five and six are about responding to instances of discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation.

- **Knowledge.** TSCG ensures that leaders, managers, contact officers and human resource employees understand their responsibilities through information, education and training.
- **Prevention Plan.** By developing or updating policies/procedures and changing practices aimed at preventing discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation and vilification, and effective mechanisms to review and improve policies/procedures.
- **Organisational Capability.** Leaders, including line managers and heads, being required to role model respectful behaviour, for instance through codes of conduct or performance review processes. Encouraging and supporting bystanders to act safely to respond to discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation. Holding people to account for unlawful workplace behaviour in a fair, consistent, and timely manner.
- **Risk Management.** By recognising that some employees and students are more vulnerable to discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation than others and providing training to prevent discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation from happening.
- **Reporting and Response.** TSCG has developed a fair and confidential reporting and complaints procedure with safe and accessible options for raising and resolving concerns, which prioritises the complainants' wellbeing. TSCG ensures that employees know how and where to make a complaint or report and are supported to do so, and any complaints are dealt with promptly and effectively. TSCG ensures that employees are safe and supported throughout the complaints process, including through identifying and avoiding victimisation.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation.** TSCG regularly monitors workplace culture, service delivery, any complaints received and employee knowledge of legal obligations to improve compliance and deal promptly with any issues that arise.

13. Learner Voice

TSCG actively promotes Learner Voice through a variety of mechanisms; ensuring the voices of young people, adult students, apprentices and students with additional needs are heard and responded to. All structures are inclusive and accessible. Accessibility is further endorsed through respecting the diversity of the college community and working collaboratively with them.

TSCG is secure in its drive to address all areas of personal and social development and create opportunities to supplement its educational provision with transformative experiences. This inclusive approach ensures the necessary skills are provided to improve life chances for a diverse college community.

Students will be participants in designing their educational provision, respecting individual styles of learning. This will be achieved by TSCG providing opportunities for regular meaningful discourse between college leadership and student representatives. This will confirm that TSCG remains current in its approach to education, exploring student-led feedback and responding to students' views. TSCG will adapt to create a learning experience that matches the needs of the student cohort.

TSCG supports and recognises a student's individuality and promotes learner voice through participation in student led structures e.g., Equalities Council, Mental Health and Wellbeing Champions, LGBTQ+ groups, Student Leadership and Representatives and the student newsletter (*written for students by students*).

TSCG promotes student-led tutorials and events to support the inclusive delivery of themed messages.

TSCG recognises and supports the improvement of outcomes for underrepresented minority groups and puts measures in place to reflect diversity and promote community and college cohesion by working with outside agencies and community partners who reflect the diversity of the college community.

14. Complaints, Dignity at Work and Discrimination

TSCG actively promotes equality, diversity and inclusion and has developed robust procedures for tackling bullying and discriminatory behaviour. TSCG takes complaints from students and employees very seriously and has a comprehensive Complaints and Compliments Policy for dealing with student complaints. The Harassment and Bullying Procedure and Grievance Procedure details how complaints from employees will be dealt with.

15. EDI Strategy and Training

The TSCG three-year strategy for EDI was approved in 2022. The purpose of the strategy is to set out not only what we do but why we do it with a clearer focus on outcomes. The strategy provides a framework for delivering TSCG's EDI objectives. As an employer, TCG has a proactive approach to training and development and recognises that it is critical for employees to have the skills and knowledge to help eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities and inclusion and value diversity.

TSCG's People and Culture Strategy and annual plan is one element of the organisation's delivery mechanism to fulfil its equality commitments. The annual plan identifies the various training and development activities to be delivered to ensure that the workforce has, as a whole, an understanding of the concepts and principles of equality as well as our duties and responsibilities and the methods to put these principles into practice.

Training and development required activities include:

- All employees, and new managers, as part of their induction, go through equality, diversity and inclusion training and awareness.
- All employees involved in recruitment and selection go through training in recruitment and selection which includes a module on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- All members of the leadership team will undertake inclusive leadership behaviour training.
- Inclusion allies to undertake training.
- Individual training, as identified through the performance management process, relevant to the job role.

16. Review

The Trafford and Stockport College Group will review the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy at least every two years or as legislation/ guidance requires.