

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Changes
1.01	Quay Huong Tran ¹	23 rd May 2022	Included a version control table

¹ This date is only indicative, and the said policy may be reviewed before due to changes in the macro and/or micro environment.

Policy: Equal Opportunities and Diversity	Date created: December 2017	Date implemented: January 2018
Responsibility: Quay Tran	Approved by: Management	To be reviewed: May 2023

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

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1 Scope of the policy

This policy covers the principles of course management and administrative procedures offered at Bliss College, ensuring that the welfare and general interest of learners are prioritised.

2 Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out Bliss College's commitments to ensuring we adhere to the diversity and equality legislation and principles in our responsibilities as a bona fide educational institution as well as partner of awarding bodies. Bliss College fully supports the principle of equal opportunities and oppose all unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of ability, age, colour, culture, disability, domestic circumstances, employment status, gender, marital/civil partnership status, nationality, political orientation, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, social background or any other grounds or status.

3 Location of the policy

You can obtain of this policy by ringing our administration team on 02085144977.

4 Communication of the policy

It is important that:

- personnel involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of all programs on offer, are fully aware of the contents of the policy.
- management will assume the responsibility for communicating all updates to this policy to all stakeholders affected by it.

5 Review of the policy

This policy is a live document and will evolve over time. Although the review dates are scheduled above, this may change due to feedback from stakeholders, external agencies and regulatory authorities. The review of the policy will ensure that procedures continue to be consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgments in promoting a fair and inclusive learning and teaching environment for all.

6 Commitment to the Policy

Bliss College's management and staff are collectively committed to ensuring that equality of opportunity and diversity is promoted for all learners and staff.

Bliss College's mission will work to enable all stakeholders to gain access to the most suitable programme on offer, and to benefit from a learning programme that leads to good quality outcomes, and matches future aims and aspirations.

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In meeting current legislative requirements, Bliss College will ensure that all learners and actual or potential employees are treated equally, regardless of disability, age, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, gender, trade union activity, religion or belief, personal circumstances and sexual orientation.

Bliss College will engage in positive active measures, to promote equality and diversity and to overcome barriers caused by disadvantages and inequalities revealed through monitoring. Through this positive action, Bliss College will:

- As much as possible, provide facilities or services (in the form of training, education, or welfare) to meet the particular circumstances of people from under-represented groups which are under-represented;
- Offer targeted job training at particular groups who are under-represented in a particular area of work;
- Encourage applications from groups who from a wide range of background and interests; and
- Strategies for positive action are intended to be temporary measures and will be kept under regular review. Positive action will cease once the special needs have been met, or if under-representation no longer exists. Bliss College will ensure that when using positive action as a strategy, it falls within the current legislation.

7 Equality and Diversity Statement

“Bliss College is committed to Equality of Opportunity. The aim is to create an environment in which people treat each other with mutual respect, without prejudice. Our Equality and Diversity strategy commits to promoting equality and embracing diversity across all our activities by treating everyone receiving or affected by the services we deliver in a fair and transparent way.

We believe in fairness and equity by giving everyone equal access to our support. Reasonable adjustments will be made for those in disadvantaged situations to ensure equal access for all.

Bliss College’s strategy will help drive forward our commitment to make a real difference and we hope that its impact will be felt by those in receipt of or are affected by our services and what we do. Service users, staff and key partners are encouraged and supported to contribute to the organic development of this Strategy, and we thank them for their contribution.”

In short, Bliss College is committed to creating an environment where there is mutual respect and equality of opportunity.

8 Key Principles and Responsibilities

1. Bliss College will challenge inequality, prejudice and discrimination. It is the duty of every member of staff and of all learners to avoid discriminatory practices and to accept personal responsibility for the application of the policy.

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2. The college embraces diversity in all its aspects, and aims to employ a workforce which reflects, at every level, the community it serves.
3. Bliss College will treat all learners and employees with respect and dignity, and seek to provide an environment free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation. The college will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against its learners and employees, either from other employees, learners, or members of the public.
4. In seeking to achieve a balanced workforce at all levels, Bliss College will ensure that no employee, job applicant or candidate for promotion will be disadvantaged or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the job. Reasonable adjustments will be made to arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for all.
5. Employees and learners will be encouraged and supported in reporting any instances of discrimination. Bliss College will ensure all allegations are fully and impartially investigated with the assistance of the Administration Team and Faculty, with due regard to confidentiality.
6. Bliss College designates the Faculty Head as having overall responsibility for equality issues and through the Administrator, Head of Departments will ensure annual reports are presented and action.

9 For Learners and Users of Bliss College

1. Bliss College will ensure that information about its programmes of study and services is made available and accessible to the widest possible audience. Publicity materials will be available in a range of formats and media to avoid prejudice and stereotyping.
2. Marketing activities will seek to encourage participation from those groups currently under-represented in the college as a whole and, in particular areas of study, by ensuring regular market intelligence briefing are circulated. Marketing will play a proactive role in promoting opportunities based on relevant data.
3. In order to ensure that all learners and potential learners are treated with equality and fairness and that diverse needs are fully met, **Bliss College** will ensure that good practice in equality and diversity are embedded into all of its policies and procedures concerning:
 - a. Initial Advice, Information and Guidance
 - b. Recruitment
 - c. Induction
 - d. Harassment and Bullying
 - e. Teaching and Learning
 - f. Assessment
 - g. Internal Verification
 - h. Disciplinary

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- i. Learner Support Services
 - j. Tutorial Programmes
 - k. Work-based Learning
 - l. Work-experience Placements
4. In ensuring that this policy is fully effective, and that all learners are committed to it, the college undertakes to work locally in partnership with the recognised learner association, National Union of Learners (NUS), and learner representatives in its development and implementation.

10 For Employees of Bliss College

In order to ensure that all staff and potential staff are treated with equality and fairness at all stages of employment, and that their treatment is based solely on objective and job-related criteria, Bliss College will ensure that equality issues are embedded into all policies and procedures, concerning:

- a. Terms and Conditions of Service
- b. Contract Terms (including fixed-term and casual)
- c. Disciplinary policy
- d. Employment of Part-time Employees
- e. Equal Pay
- f. Job evaluation process
- g. Grievance
- h. Induction
- i. Maternity, Paternity, Parental and Adoption Leave
- j. Recruitment and Selection
- k. Sickness Leave
- l. Termination (including redundancy)
- m. Training and Career Development
- n. Anti-Bullying and Harassment

11 Implementation of the Policy

The responsibility for making the policy work in practice rests with all management, staff and learners of the college. Bliss College will undertake equality and diversity impact assessments to ensure that policies and procedures are fit for purpose and so far, as is reasonably practicable meet the needs of all learners and employees.

11.1 Learner Monitoring

- a. The gender, ethnic origin, disability and age of all applicants and enrolees will be monitored to inform marketing, recruitment, promotional and curriculum planning. Course teams will identify and monitor other contextual socio-economic factors to inform curriculum development.

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- b. Admissions and enrolment procedures will be supportive, accessible and as straightforward as possible. The criteria for admissions will be as stated within the Admissions Policy.
- c. The college will identify additional support needs, and as far as is reasonably practicable and within resource constraints, will endeavour to meet those needs.
- d. Bliss College will seek to make continuous improvements to physical access in all its buildings and surrounding as much as possible. Reasonable adjustments will be made to provision where learners with disabilities might otherwise be substantially disadvantaged. An annual review will be undertaken to monitor progress in achieving accessibility for all learners. Where reasonably practicable, classes will be moved to allow access to the curriculum for all learners.
- e. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will have the same rights of access as other learners. Guidance and support will be provided to enable such learners to be integrated into the full range of programmes of study according to capability.
- f. So far as is reasonably practicable, Bliss College will offer individual and flexible programmes of study to learners who request and/or need them. Measures to assess and accredit prior learning and/or experience will be used where this is permitted by examining bodies.
- g. As part of their induction programme, all learners will be made aware of the college's Equality and Diversity Policy, and of their rights and responsibilities according to the service standards, and the college's Complaints and Grievance Procedures Policy. Learner understanding and feedback of this will be monitored through the learner voice and tutorial processes
- h. Schemes of work, lesson plans, and college originated curriculum materials, and assessments will be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that they promote best practice in terms of equality and diversity.
- i. Recruitment, attendance, participation, retention, achievement, progression destination, learner enjoyment, and wider outcomes will be analysed against a range of criteria, such as age, gender and ethnicity, and will be used to inform curriculum and assessment policies.
- j. Equality and diversity will be promoted through individual and group tutorials, cultural awareness events and themed workshops.

12 Employment Monitoring

Bliss College will ensure that all employees are recruited, selected, trained and promoted solely on the basis of ability and the requirements of the job. All staff will be made aware of the Equal Opportunities Policy, including Gender, Equality, Disability Equality and Age Equality schemes, all of which are on the college intranet. The

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college will ensure that HR policies and practice fulfil the principles of equal opportunities.

It will adopt best practice in Human Resources to monitor the equality and diversity of employees, including;

- a. Ethnicity, disability, age and gender profiles
- b. Full-time, part-time status
- c. Permanent, temporary status
- d. Length of service
- e. Place of work, including campus
- f. Pay scales
- g. Sickness and absence records
- h. Appraisals, promotions, regarding, pay awards

13 Complaints Procedures

1. If a member of staff believes they have not been treated fairly, due to prejudice, or discrimination, they should raise their complaint through the Grievance Procedure or the HR policy on the Prevention of Harassment and Bullying.
2. If a learner believes they have not been treated fairly, due to prejudice, or discrimination, they should raise their complaint through the Learner Complaints Procedures.

13.1 Process for monitoring Equality and Diversity Policy

- The Equality and Diversity Committee chaired by the Director of Operations or a designated staff member.
- The committee will meet at least once a year or as often as necessary as operational issues influence management.
- The Equality and Diversity Committee review all equality and diversity action plans and statistics relating to staff and learners.

End.

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