

EQUALITY POLICY OPEN TRAINING COLLEGE

1. Introduction

College is committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and students irrespective of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, nationality or ethnic or national origin, or membership of the travelling community.

The concept of equality is central to the shared values and ethos of the Open Training College. The principles and practice of equality are intrinsic to the way we conduct our business and working relationships and the shared values we hold.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to promote equality of opportunity for all staff and students of the Open Training College by ensuring that all administrative, academic and other practices operate on the basis of the appropriate merits, qualifications, abilities and potential of individuals, and do not discriminate against any individual on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or membership of the travelling community.

The Open Training College also operates in accordance with the St. Michael's House *Dignity at Work* and *Equal Opportunities* policies, which have been designed to ensure compliance with the Employment Equality Acts (1998-2015).

3. Scope

This policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals at Open Training College including all students, core and associate academic staff and stakeholder engaged with the OTC.

4. Policy Statement

Open Training College is committed to the development, maintenance and support of a policy of equal opportunity for staff, students and prospective staff and students. The OTC has and will continue to develop policies, procedures and practices that comply with the Equality Employment Acts 1998-2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000-2015. OTC is committed to the eradication of unfair

and discriminatory practices, direct and indirect, however and whenever they occur, and ensures that concepts of diversity and equality of opportunity are enshrined in its values and objectives.

Equality in the Workplace

The aim of the policy is to promote equality of opportunity for the OTC staff. The College ensures that, through its recruitment and selection policy and procedures, it provides equality of opportunities for employment so that the workforce reflects the diversity of the community it serves. In addition, the College is committed to the achievement of equality of opportunity for all staff in career development, training, promotion and re-grading.

The College monitors and reviews employment policies and practices to ensure that they do not, directly or indirectly, discriminate unfairly against individual members of staff or particular groups of staff.

A copy of this policy and related policies are included in the QA Document (QuAD), OTC Staff handbook and the SMH Human Resources Policies and Procedures documentation. Attention to this information is drawn to at all induction programmes for new staff. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Recruitment Policy and CPD Policy.

Equality in Student Life

OTC recognises and implements the philosophy that equality of treatment in the College educational environment is a fundamental right. To this end College endeavours to devise and implement procedures which will ensure that no student or potential student will receive less favourable treatment than any other because of age (subject to Colleges regulations in regard to minimum age of entry), nationality or ethnic or national origin, gender, civil status, family status, disability, religious belief, sexual orientation, or membership of the traveller community.

The objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities as tutors, assessors, administrators, managers, and representatives of the College under the provisions of national legislation and the policies of the College.
- To ensure that all applicants to the College are treated fairly and in accordance with published policies and procedures and have equality of access to programme and services.
- To ensure that the College affords all students an equal opportunity to develop their full potential; the policies, procedures and practices of the College in relation to teaching, learning

and assessment will seek to ensure equality of opportunity for all students and, as far as is practicable, practices will conform with the published procedures of the College.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The College Director has ultimate executive responsibility for the effective development and implementation of academic policies. The Head of Quality & Academic Affairs has overall delegated responsibility for coordinating the day to day operation of the policies and the development, maintenance and monitoring of supporting procedures. Programme Directors and Tutors are responsible for pursuing the implementation of these policies in relation to the activities of their programmes.

6. Definitions

Equality as understood in this policy is defined as: 'treating people fairly, regardless of any irrelevant attributes they may possess, such as skin colour, background or lifestyle'. It means that people will not suffer unfairly, or benefit unduly, just because they happen to belong to a certain group, ethnic group or sex, or because they happen to possess certain personal attributes.

(Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004)

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Document Owner/Contact:		Head of Quality & Academic Affairs
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy:		Recruitment Policy CPD Policy Student Supports Policy Support for students with Disabilities and Specific Learning difficulties Academic Integrity Policy Complaints Policy and Procedures Dignity at Work Policy (SMH) Equal Opportunities policy (SMH)
Audience:		Public – accessible to anyone
Reference(s)		Equality Employment Acts 1998-2015 Equal Status Act 2000-2015