

North West Regional College

Policy and Procedures

Good Relations Policy

Issue	Document Title	Date Last Reviewed	Next Review Date	Responsibility of
5	Good Relations Policy	August 2024	August 2027	Michelle Grant
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North West Regional College

Good Relations Policy



Introduction

This document sets out the policy of the Governing Body and Leadership and Management Team of the North West Regional College to comply with its obligations to promote Good Relations, arising from Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998.

The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good relations in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This policy should be interpreted in a manner consistent with the aforementioned legislation.

The College will provide this policy in alternative formats on request where reasonably practicable, eg, Braille, Large Print, Audio Formats, etc, and/or alternative language.

Good Relations: the ability to value diversity, equity and respect for each other.

Stakeholders: persons having legitimate involvement with or in a College, other than as Governors, staff or students. The term includes, among others, work placement providers, contractors (including auditors and consultants), and parents or guardians of students under 18 years of age.

Scope

This guidance on Good Relations is applicable to all Governors, College staff, students and other stakeholders.

Statutory Duties

In accordance with Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the College is required, without prejudice to its obligations under subsection (1) of Section 75, to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Policy

The North West Regional College is committed to the three principles of Community Relations: Equity, Diversity and Interdependence. It values the diversity brought to it by individuals, including Governors, employees, students and stakeholders. The College believes that it benefits from engaging staff and students from a variety of racial, political and religious backgrounds, allowing it to meet the needs of a diverse student population within a multi-cultural society. The College will treat all employees, students and stakeholders with respect and dignity and will seek to

provide a positive learning and working environment, free from political, religious or racial discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

The aims of this Policy are to ensure that equity and respect for difference are placed at the heart of the College's structures, systems and culture; and to go beyond complying with legislation by ensuring organisational commitment to the principles and practices of equity, diversity and interdependence.

The College recognises that institutional discrimination can exist, and that no organisation is immune to it. It is committed to the creation of a supportive learning environment, which demonstrates respect and tolerance for difference, and where individuals are supported in order to achieve their potential. To this end, the College has implemented procedures to deal with complaints of harassment etc, and will take such offences very seriously. In the most serious cases, this may lead to suspension or dismissal of offending persons. The North West Regional College will deal in a sensitive manner with complaints from individuals in relation to harassment.

The College will seek not only to eliminate discrimination, whether overt or covert, but also to create a working and learning environment based on positive relations between members of different religious beliefs, political opinions or racial groups. To this end, the College will provide training and support for specialist staff, will consult with staff about their experience of the working environment, and will seek to ensure as far as possible equity for communities in relation to access to learning programmes and facilities. The aim is to create a positive, inclusive ethos where issues of good relations, stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly.

The College also has specific duties to:

- Address and promote good relations throughout the organisation;
- Monitor and assess the effectiveness of this Policy.

Responsibilities

Governors are responsible for ensuring that:

- The College is fully committed to the promotion of equality and good relations;
- Equality training features as part of the College's staff development plan;
- They are aware of the College's statutory responsibilities in relation to equality legislation as an employer and service provider.

The College's Principal and Chief Executive and the Leadership and Management Team are responsible for taking the lead in creating a positive, inclusive ethos that challenges sectarian and racist behaviour or actions on the part of managers, staff or students, and for ensuring that:

- They are aware of the College's statutory duties in relation to Section 75 legislation;

- All aspects of College policy and activity are sensitive to racial and sectarian issues;
- Student induction programmes reflect the College's commitment to promote equality of opportunity;
- Appropriate training and staff development is provided to support the appreciation and understanding of diversity.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of the College's statutory duties in relation to Section 75 legislation.

Training

The North West Regional College will initiate and implement an online awareness training programme for all staff.

Monitoring

A monitoring process will be implemented to ensure that staff and students feel comfortable in the College environment.

Complaints Procedure

The College will deal with all complaints regarding equality in accordance with the Equality Scheme Complaints Procedure.

The complainant will be provided with assistance in relation to accessible formats i.e. Braille, large print, audio formats, etc, if required.

Note: Staff should not attempt to challenge or confront racism or sectarianism, unless of a very minor nature, until after they have received appropriate training from the College or have sought advice from the Leadership and Management Team.

RECORD OF CHANGES

Modifications made since the last review are as follows:

Record of Changes				
Review Date	Page No.	Change Comment	Date of Change	Initials
August 2024	1	Review dates	August 2024	FH