Regent College London | Mumbai

Equality and Diversity Policy

Owner	Head of Centre		
Version	1.0		
Changes	• Clarified roles and responsibilities for EDI under our corporate and academic governance structure		
Approval date	May 2026	**Approved by**	Academic Council
Implementation date	June 2026	**Date of next review**	May 2027
Related internal policy	• Access and Participation Plan • Inclusion Policy and Procedure • Student Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy		
Related external policies and regulations	• Equality Act 2010 • Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)		

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Purpose

1. To provide an Equality and Diversity Policy applicable to all staff, students and others involved with RCL Mumbai College based on best practice in the UK higher education sector. The Policy supports coordination and implementation at a strategic level, reflects RCL Mumbai (the College) core values, and ensures that they are embedded within appropriate College policies for staff and students.

Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

2. RCL Mumbai is committed to supporting, developing and promoting equality and diversity in all of its practices and activities and aims to establish an inclusive culture free from discrimination and based upon the values of dignity, courtesy and respect. The College will support and develop its staff through providing all with access to facilities, personal and career development opportunities and employment on the basis of equality. The College is committed to creating and sustaining a positive, supportive and excellent teaching and learning environment for its students. We are committed to providing fair, equitable and mutually supportive learning and working environment for both our students and our staff.

3. The College is committed to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.

4. The College values diversity and recognises that our college is greatly enhanced through the wide and disparate range of backgrounds, experiences, views, beliefs and cultures represented within its staff and student groups. We aim to embrace diversity in all of its activities and proudly acknowledge that variety and difference are intrinsic to the wellbeing and future development our College.

5. Our Equality and Diversity Policy applies to all students and prospective students, to all applicants for staff positions with the College, to all staff employed on a full time or part-time basis, to all staff on permanent or temporary contracts, to agency staff, to honorary title/contract holders and visitors undertaking duties in the name of the College and to subcontractors undertaking work on the College site, and all visitors to the College.

Objectives of the Equality and Diversity Policy

6. RCL Mumbai College is committed to ensuring that an environment is created that respects the diversity of staff and students and enabling them to achieve their full potential. To achieve these objectives the following basic rights for all existing and prospective staff and students are acknowledged:

   (a) to be treated with respect and dignity

(b) to be treated fairly with regard to all policies, procedures, assessments and related activities
(c) to be encouraged to reach one's full potential

7. Further objectives of this policy are to ensure that in carrying out activities related to the College's higher education provision due regard will be given to:

(a) eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
(b) advancing equality of opportunity across all the activities of the College
(c) fostering good relations between people of a diverse background.

8. Through implementation of this policy,RCL Mumbai will aim to:

(a) develop and promote a culture of equality and diversity throughout the College
(b) develop and promote a culture of dignity, courtesy and respect
(c) support staff and students, including provision of relevant support relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation
(d) work to prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination
(e) deal with all forms of discrimination consistently and effectively
(f) ensure that this Equality and Diversity Policy influences and informs the culture of the College.

9. The College will work to ensure that staff, students, prospective staff and students, visitors, contractors and sub-contractors working for the College are aware of our commitment to equality and diversity.

Roles and Responsibilities

10. It is the responsibility of all members of the College's community to behave with dignity, courtesy and respect, and to act in a manner that does not unlawfully discriminate at all times.

11. Students at have the following responsibilities with respect to adherence to this Policy:

- to actively encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidences of behaviour that fails to comply with this Policy
- to be aware of and support this Equality and Diversity Policy
- to support the aims and objectives of this Equality and Diversity Policy
- to be aware of equality and diversity issues.

12. Staff at have the following responsibilities with respect to adherence to this Policy:

- to be aware of and support this Policy
- to actively encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidences of behaviour that fail to comply with this Policy

13. Academic Council is responsible for ensuring that equality, diversity, and inclusion principles are embedded across all its activities and decisions, and for overseeing student access, participation, and success through initiatives that promote equality of opportunity. It has oversight of the equality, diversity and inclusion process and policies for staff and students, including the review of reporting of discrimination and under representation and action taken.

Application of the Equality and Diversity Policy

Recruitment, Selection and Admission

14. All information contained in prospectuses, websites and other material used in the recruitment of students will promote equality of opportunity and make reference to this Policy. All staff involved in the recruitment, selection and admission of students will have an awareness of equality and diversity.

Assessment

15. There will be clear, consistent and transparent criteria for student assessments and all assessments will take place on an equal opportunities basis.

Career Planning and Participation

16. All students will have access to career planning support and will be encouraged to participate fully in the academic, cultural and social life of the College.

Discipline and Student Complaints

17. Discipline and student complaints policies and procedures will be applied fairly and transparently for all students. Allegations of harassment or discrimination will be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Code.

Training

18. At induction, all staff are reminded to complete their mandatory online training, which includes a module on the Equality Act 2010 and the College's Equality and Diversity Policy. This training reinforces awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion expectations across the College.

19. Students will be briefed about the College's Equality and Diversity Policy during induction at the start of their studies. Any changes to the Equality and Diversity Policy will be communicated to students through the College's virtual learning environment.

Communication

20. The Equality and Diversity Policy will be made available to staff, students, prospective students and the public more generally on the College's website. This Policy and related information, including web-links, will be made available for students and staff on the virtual learning environment.

Breach of RCL Mumbai quality and Diversity Policy

21. Contravention or breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter and offenders will be dealt with under the staff or student disciplinary policies, as appropriate.

Data Collection and Monitoring

22. The College collects and analyses equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data for staff and students to identify disparities, inform Equality Impact Assessments, and evaluate the effectiveness of actions and objectives. Data is collected on a voluntary basis, handled confidentially, reported in aggregate only, and processed in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Appendix 1: Glossary of key words/terms

Age is a protected characteristic. A person belonging to a particular age (for example, 65 year olds) or a range of ages (for example 50 to 60 years of age).

Direct Discrimination is where a person or group of people is treated less favourably than another individual or group of people because of a protected characteristic.

Direct Discrimination by Association is where a person or group of people is treated less favourably because they associate with another person or group of people who has protected characteristics.

Direct Discrimination by Perception is where a person of group of people is treated less favourably than another person or group of people because other people or groups of people think they have a protected characteristic.

Disability is a protected characteristic. A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long term and adverse effect of the person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities. Long term means that the disability has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months. Substantial means more than minor or trivial.

Diversity is concerned with acknowledging, respecting and valuing differences between individuals and groups of people.

Equality is about ensuring that people are treated fairly and given equal opportunities. Equality is *not* about treating everyone in the same way. Equality is about ensuring that different individuals and groups have their needs met in appropriate ways. Equality offers a framework that enables opportunity, access, participation and contribution that is fair and inclusive.

Equality Impact Assessment is a process whereby a policy, procedure or practice is reviewed, and if necessary amended, to ensure that it does not discriminate against any person or group of people with a protected characteristic.

Gender Reassignment is a protected characteristic. This is the process of transitioning from one gender to another and is a personal process, rather than a medical process (it does not require someone to undergo medical treatment to be protected). Transsexual refers to a person who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. It is important not to confuse gender reassignment with sexual orientation. A transsexual person can be a gay man, lesbian, heterosexual or bisexual.

Harassment is where a person or group of people behave in such a way that their conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an environment that is hostile, degrading, humiliating or intimidating.

Indirect Discrimination is a rule or policy that applies to everyone and as a consequence disadvantages people or groups of people with protected characteristics.

Marriage and Civil Partnership is a protected characteristic. Marriage is a legal union between a man and a woman, a man and a man, and a woman and a woman. Same sex couples can also have their relationship legally recognized as a civil partnership. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Positive Action means offering targeted assistance to people so that they can take full and equal advantage of particular opportunities. Positive action means taking steps to ensure that all groups of people have equal opportunity of access to, for example, a college's services and facilities.

Pregnancy and Maternity is a protected characteristic. Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for twenty six weeks after giving birth and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Protected Characteristics are definitions for groups of people given protection under the Equality Act 2010. Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, and belief, and sex and sexual orientation.

Race is a protected characteristic. Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins.

Reasonable Adjustment is the duty to make reasonable adjustment is made up of three requirements. For providers of education these requirements are to take reasonable steps to:

(i) Avoid the substantial disadvantage where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled students at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who are not disabled.

(ii) Remove or alter a physical feature or provide a reasonable means of avoiding such a feature where it puts disabled students at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who are not disabled.

(iii) Provide an auxiliary aid where disabled students would, but for the provision of such an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who are not disabled.

Religion or belief is a protected characteristic. Religion means any religion or a lack of religion. A religion need not be mainstream or well-known to gain protection as a religion. A religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief system

means any religious or philosophical belief and includes lack of belief. A belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex is a protected characteristic. A male or a female.

Sexual Orientation is a protected characteristic. Sexual orientation is a person's sexual attraction to persons of the same sex (a gay man or a lesbian), persons of the opposite sex (heterosexual) or either sex (bisexual).

Victimisation is where a person or group of people are treated less favourably because they have, for example, raised a complaint or grievance under the Equality Act 2010.

Appendix 2: Examples of Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

Example of direct discrimination

A college providing higher education programmes rejects a prospective male student's application to a childcare programme of study because the Admissions Tutor does not think it appropriate for a male to be working with young children.

This would constitute unlawful discrimination on the grounds of the protected characteristic of sex.

Example of direct discrimination by association

Jane applies to a language class and discloses to the tutor that her boyfriend is Jewish, although she is not. The tutor then tells Jane that he has made a mistake and that the class is actually full. Later, Jane finds out that others have been allowed to join the language class after she was refused entry.

The tutor's conduct is likely to amount to direct discrimination by association because of religion or belief as a result of Jane's association with her Jewish boyfriend.

Example of direct discrimination by perception Jay, a landlord, advertises a flat to rent in a local paper and Vijay meets Jay to view the flat and find out further details. Jay assumes that Vijay is gay because of his mannerisms, voice and style of dress. As Jay does not want to rent his property to a gay man, he informs Vijay that the flat is no longer available.

This is indirect discrimination because of sexual orientation due to Jay perception that Vijay is a gay man.

Example of indirect discrimination

In a neighbourhood that includes a large community, a local community group provides lunch for elderly people but they say that because the supplier cannot provide meals they are unable to provide meals for Muslim customers. The policy not to supply meals would disadvantage Muslim people in particular.

The community's group policy not to supply meals is unlikely to be justifiable since they could simply seek and alternative supplier that could supply meals.

Example of Harassment

A member of staff makes a derogatory remark about a student going through gender reassignment. Another member of staff finds the first member of staff's remark offensive.

The member of staff's derogatory remark would constitute harassment.

Example of victimisation

An individual ran a training seminar for unemployed people to help them prepare their CVs. Ahmed, a Muslim delegate attending the seminar, wrote to complain that he was not excused from part of the seminar to attend afternoon prayers. The next time Ahmed applied to attend a follow up seminar he was told that there were no places left, but later found out that his friend had been given a place, even though he had applied after Ahmed.

Ahmed had been victimized because he had made a complaint related to his religion.

Example of disability discrimination

A student diagnosed with autism often speaks out of turn during tutorials, which can create a disruptive atmosphere for the tutor and other students. Because of his behaviour the student with autism is asked not to attend tutorials in future.

This is likely to constitute discrimination arising from disability.