



Single Equality Scheme 2019-2023

February 2019

This policy applies to :	All College departments and services as part of the PSED and 2010 Equality Act.
Author/Department:	Equality and Diversity Coordinator
Area/Person responsible:	Equality and Diversity Coordinator
Date approved:	February 2019
Related Documents/ Policies:	Equality and Diversity Objectives and Equality and Diversity annual report.
Date of Next Review:	2023 but with annual updates of outside resources and college context.

Date of most recent review:	
Changes made:	

The Equality Act 2010: The Equality Duty

The College has a duty to consider the needs of all individuals in our day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to our employees. The Equality Duty has three aims, which require the College to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Does the policy support the aims of the Equality Duty?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No		N/A	
If no, please state which groups may be affected and complete a full equalities impact assessment (guidance and forms available on the intranet)						
Impact Assessment Reference:						

Initial Impact Assessment Completed	
--	--

Date	
-------------	--

Review of Policy	
-------------------------	--

Date	
-------------	--

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION BY THE PRINCIPAL	5
2	VISION FOR EQUALITY	5
3	COLLEGE VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS	5
4	COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN (2018-2021)	6
5	EQUALITY SCHEME CONTEXT	6
6	COLLEGE PROFILE	6
7	MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010	7
8	LEGAL PROTECTION OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010	7
9	PROMOTING EQUALITY	8
10	TACKLING DISCRIMINATION	9
11	FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS	9
12	SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS TO ADVANCE EQUALITY FOR PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS	10
12.1	RACE.....	10
12.2	RELIGION.....	10
12.2.1	Provision for Christian worship:	10
12.2.2	Provision for Muslim worship:.....	10
12.2.3	Provision for Hindu worship:.....	10
12.2.4	Provision for worship of other faiths:.....	10
12.3	DISABILITY/ LEARNING DIFFERENCE.....	11
12.3.1	Mental Ill Health	11
12.4	GENDER	11
12.5	TRANSGENDER.....	11
12.6	AGE	11
12.7	SEXUAL ORIENTATION	12
12.8	PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY	12
12.9	MARRIAGE	12
12.10	SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND.....	12
13	ACTION PLAN TO ADVANCE EQUALITY	12
14	RESPONSIBILITIES	13
14.1	Principal & Deputy Principal.....	13
14.2	Governing Body	13
14.3	Senior Leadership Team	13
14.4	Head of Subject	14
14.5	Support Area Managers.....	14

14.6	All Staff	14
15	STAFF GUIDE TO REPORTING OF EQUALITY & DIVERSITY INCIDENTS.....	14
15.1	Student Related	14
15.2	Site related	15
15.3	Staff Related	15

Ashton Sixth Form College

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME 2019-2023

1 INTRODUCTION BY THE PRINCIPAL

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Single Equality Scheme for 2019-2023 for Ashton Sixth Form College. This scheme embodies the values, attitudes and ethos of the college; we take seriously our responsibilities in ensuring that all individuals, whether working, studying or visiting the college, should be treated as individuals and with respect.

Policies and procedures such as those which underpin this single equality scheme are important in ensuring that everyone has the best experience at the college. As an educational institution, we have a responsibility to lead from the front, helping to educate all whom we meet of the importance of the equality and diversity agenda.

We welcome individuals from all sections of the community and hope this this scheme supports our aims to be a beacon for equality and diversity, celebrating both our differences and our similarities across the whole of our college community.

2 VISION FOR EQUALITY

The promotion of equality for all members of our community is central to all aspects of our provision at Ashton Sixth Form College. All members of our diverse community can expect to be treated fairly and with respect irrespective of their background. We are committed to working towards the eradication of any disadvantage that may occur from an individual's background.

3 COLLEGE VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

'Transforming lives through learning'

Mission statements:

- To engender a love of learning through an excellent standard of teaching and learning for all.
- To lay the foundations for career success.
- To promote well-being and inspire students and staff to lead fulfilling lives.

More information about the college mission statements and the strategic plan for the college can be found on the college website.

4 COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN (2018-2021)

The college has outlined 5 strategic aims as part of our 2018-2021 strategic plan. The aims refer to priorities surrounding inclusion, fostering good relations with our students, enhancing staff/student well-being and delivering a curriculum which meets the needs of all our students and wider community.

The 5 strategic aims are:

1. To achieve excellence in all aspects of our work.
2. To deliver relevant and coherent 16-19 study programmes which meet the needs of students and the wider community
3. To deliver a relevant adult and Higher Education curriculum which meets the needs of students and the community
4. To enhance the well-being of students and staff
5. To secure a sustainable and successful future for the college

More information surrounding the 2018-2021 strategic aims of the college can be found on the college website.

5 EQUALITY SCHEME CONTEXT

Ashton Sixth Form College has over 2,000 students aged 16 to 18, most of whom are full-time, and adults enrolled in full and part-time provision, including higher education. Educational provision encompasses over forty A level subjects as well as a variety of subjects at levels 2 and 3 vocational (BTEC extended diploma.)

**“A strongly inclusive ethos in the college which recognises and celebrates
the achievement of all students”**

Ofsted 2016

Our college is situated in the Greater Manchester borough of Tameside. Regularly updated figures reporting the diversity of the borough can be found at the links in the appendices associated with this document.

The information is based on the 2011 census and the National Office of Statistics.

This information is used each year to construct the college’s Equality and Diversity Report.

6 COLLEGE PROFILE

Please refer to the appendices associated to this scheme for up to date information about the college diversity profile.

More information regarding the college profile, including detailed analysis of various student groups and college services can be found in the annual college Equality and Diversity report.

7 MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 sets out 9 protected characteristics:

- Race and ethnicity
- Gender
- Disability and learning difficulty
- Sexual orientation
- Religion, faith and belief
- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership

We expect that all members of the college community, and those who visit our premises including our strategic and informal partners, will promote equality, tackle all forms of discrimination and foster good working relationships between diverse groups. Everyone, regardless of their background, will at all times be treated fairly, with respect and will value others equally thus preventing discrimination.

Under the Equality Act 2010 and the subsequent Public Sector Equality Duty April 2011 we make a firm commitment at Ashton Sixth Form College to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

To actively comply with the legislation, our Equality Objectives are published online and are reviewed annually as part of your annual Equality and Diversity report. We also continue to carry out Equality Analysis of new plans, proposals, procedures and policies to eradicate the potential for discrimination.

8 LEGAL PROTECTION OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Regulations provide protection against discrimination and harassment. They do not establish entitlements.

One of the crucial features of the Equality Scheme Policy is ensure individuals presenting with or without each of the 9 protected characteristics are not discriminated against.

We do so by ensuring each of the following circumstances are prevented:

- Direct Discrimination – Where someone is treated less favourably than another person on the grounds of their protected characteristic.
- Indirect Discrimination: Applying a “provision, criterion or practice” which disadvantages a person.

- Harassment: Is defined as circumstances that violate a person's dignity, or that create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. This includes having regard to all circumstances, in particular the perception of the complainant, "it should be reasonably considered" that the conduct being complained of resulted in harassment.
- Liability: This can fall on both the employer and on the employee who is found to have acted in a discriminatory way.
- Burden of proof: Employers will need to prove that they did not discriminate or harass, once the complainant has made a prima facie case.
- Relationships, which come to an end: it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a former employee after the working relationship between them has ended, if the act is closely linked to the former relationship, e.g. the employer refuses to give a reference because of someone's religion or sexuality.

For more information on The Equality Act 2010 please visit the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>

9 PROMOTING EQUALITY

Prior to application and entry to Ashton Sixth Form College, the prospectus and website are the first points of contact for potential learners. The prospectus, college website and college social media accounts all embrace the opportunity to promote equality. This is done often with images of learners which reflect the diverse community of Ashton Sixth Form College as well as the extensive range of courses on offer.

The Equality and Diversity social media accounts (Twitter and Instagram: ASFC_EandD) are updated regularly and highlights the college celebration of national equality dates (for example LGBT month, Black History month, Anti-Bullying week) as well as local equality and diversity events and achievements of learners from diverse backgrounds.

At the core of promoting equality is an inclusive curriculum offer for learners. To facilitate this, all staff receive regular professional and EDI training. This is applied with auditing of planning documents/ learning environments to maximise the opportunities which arise for promotion of equality.

Every opportunity is taken to remove potential barriers to accessing the curriculum. The tutorial system further takes the opportunity to raise awareness with all learners on a variety of current equality issues. The extensive offer of enrichment activities complements the curriculum.

Throughout Ashton Sixth Form College, inclusive displays and events are organised to raise awareness and to foster good learner relationships linking to national celebratory dates.

Opportunities are provided for learners of all backgrounds to contribute to learner voice surveys and focus groups. In addition, learners are invited to participate in a learner led equality group focussed on discussions around various issues and also to lead action research to gather learner views.

Within the college staff teams, we have a firm commitment to ensuring that staff from all backgrounds can fulfil their potential. Where appropriate, we will apply positive action to balance any underrepresented groups. Our aim is to ensure that our staff profile reflects society and the local community as well as the learner population.

10 TACKLING DISCRIMINATION

A key element of tackling discrimination is the extensive analysis of data by protected characteristics. Where achievement gaps are identified, actions are put into place at college and also course level as evidenced through the annual self-assessment reporting cycle (SARs).

Incident reporting is continually developed to ensure that learners and staff are confident to report any discrimination they may see or experience through a variety of formal and informal channels. Where discrimination is reported, actions are taken to eradicate this as appropriate and the victim/perpetrator are supported in appropriate ways.

Training for staff to develop confidence to recognise and challenge discrimination is updated regularly. Policies, procedures and plans are equality analysed to minimise the risk of disadvantage to any group by new developments in any area.

Strategies are in place to actively recruit from under represented protected groups in staff. The objective is for the staff population to represent the learner population as closely as possible.

11 FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS

To maintain our harmonious college community, encouraging acceptance between the different learner groups in Ashton Sixth Form College is a priority.

The inclusive learning, library and LRC teams do a tremendous amount of work each year in promoting equality and working with students on a range of issues related to diversity including mental health awareness and learning differences.

Staff develop curriculum activities designed to encourage learners to understand different groups in society and how they are disadvantaged as relevant to the subject area. Furthermore, a variety of group work features across the curriculum and in tutorials to encourage learners to interact with each other.

The work done within lessons is supported by college wide events and enrichment activities, including an annual college community day. Alongside this event staff also have an annual enrichment day integral to their other staff activities to provide opportunities to build stronger relationships between staff.

Partnership working within the community of Tameside continues to be an important part of building relations between learners and their community. A diverse range of volunteering opportunities are actively promoted and encouraged. The Chaplaincy is pro-active in fostering good relations between learners of different faiths as well as building partnerships with community organisations.

Globally, Ashton Sixth Form College has established links with the Nile Vocational Institute in Uganda through Ugandaid charity. This raises awareness and provides valuable opportunities for learners and staff to engage with global issues of poverty in the developing world.

12 SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS TO ADVANCE EQUALITY FOR PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

12.1 RACE

All members of the community at Ashton Sixth Form College can expect to be treated fairly regardless of their ethnic heritage. We pro-actively encourage learners and staff from diverse backgrounds to study and work at Ashton Sixth Form College.

Any form of racial discrimination will not be tolerated in our community and if learners or staff are reported as being involved in acts of racism (physical, verbal or online) they can expect disciplinary procedures in accordance to college procedures. It is our moral duty to proactively promote equality to foster relationships between persons from diverse backgrounds and take necessary measures to tackle discrimination and to improve inclusivity.

12.2 RELIGION

Ashton Sixth Form College has a firm commitment to respecting all religious beliefs and practices and developing understanding. There are learners and staff at Ashton Sixth Form College from all major religions. Facilitating harmony between members of our community from different religious perspectives centres on the provision of a multi faith Chaplaincy including cross college events.

12.2.1 Provision for Christian worship:

Prayer meetings are held weekly and calendar dates marked with appropriate celebrations. A Christian union meets weekly and is open to staff and students to discuss issues and reflect the Christian views in our community.

12.2.2 Provision for Muslim worship:

Jummah prayers are held weekly and appropriate ablution facilities are in place to enable learners and staff to pray whilst on college premises. Dates of Ramadan and Eid are highlighted and suitable adjustments made to curriculum, assessment, examinations etc. to accommodate these key Muslim dates. We support young Muslim women in their choice when wishing to wear the Hijab scarf in accordance to their religious practice.

12.2.3 Provision for Hindu worship:

Ashton Sixth Form College enables a society for Hindu learners to facilitate greater understanding of the Hindu faith. This society has national links with university societies. Diwali is marked with a celebratory event/ display.

12.2.4 Provision for worship of other faiths:

The multi-faith Chaplaincy will facilitate worship for learners and staff of other faiths as required through discussion with the Chaplain. The Chaplain maintains strong links with the Tameside multi-faith forum and will endeavour to support all faiths. The quiet space offered by the Chaplaincy is open to all the community including those of no faith.

12.3 DISABILITY/ LEARNING DIFFERENCE

Ashton Sixth Form College welcomes learners and staff who have a disability/ learning difficulty and will endeavour at all times to ensure reasonable adjustments are made to facilitate access to services, facilities and to learning and working. Accessibility is central to successful learning and working for disabled people and we will continue to make sure facilities are kept accessible to enable full participation in college life.

Senior tutors and the Inclusive Learning team will provide one to one support for learners with a disability or learning difficulty to meet individual requirements. The Inclusive Learning team will also facilitate further assessment of learning support needs as they arise during a learner's course of study. Examinations are adapted according to any learner's additional needs with the specified additional time plus suitable locations tailored to an individual's needs.

Line managers and Human Resources develop individual plans for disabled staff as part of the performance management review process so adjustments can be made and changing needs met. The aim is to retain staff with a disability or learning difficulty and ensure they can participate fully in continuing professional development to fulfil their career aims without discrimination.

12.3.1 Mental Ill Health

At Ashton Sixth Form College we are aware of the growing need to provide an inclusive service for learners and staff who experience mental ill health issues, whether temporary or as an ongoing condition. We are committed to providing support through the dedicated counselling provision, links with external agencies and through the pastoral provision. Learners or staff who experience mental health issues can expect to be treated on an individual basis and a support plan developed as appropriate with the Inclusive Learning/Human Resources to enable integration and success.

12.4 GENDER

Ashton Sixth Form College is committed to equality between males/females and endeavours to identify and close any gaps between learners in achievement and staff in pay. All recruitment and promotions are screened for gender bias and learners encouraged and supported to study non-traditional gender subjects. Female staff are given the opportunity to develop management careers through association with the Women's Leadership Network. Recruitment aims to balance male representation in departments.

12.5 TRANSGENDER

We are committed to fully supporting any learners or workers with their preferred gender identity and to eradicate any victimisation or harassment that may occur. When this involves gender reassignment, consultation will take place and appropriate adjustments made to meet the needs of the staff or learner as required so they continue to feel included in college life. They will be able to use facilities, including toilets, as appropriate to their preferred gender.

12.6 AGE

Our provision caters in the majority for learners between the ages of 16-19. There is, however, a significant number of learners in the Higher Education and Skills provision (800) who span all ages up to seventy plus. No member of our community should experience any discrimination based on their age, including staff, and we welcome the diversity that different ages bring to the college community.

12.7 SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Learners and staff of all sexual orientations are welcome to learn and work at Ashton Sixth Form College. For both learners and staff, any form of discrimination based on sexual orientation will not be tolerated and appropriate disciplinary actions according to college procedures will be implemented for any perpetrators of discrimination. There is support available within college through the counselling service and tutorial system plus the learner led equality group includes support for LGB learners. Links with outside agencies to provide additional channels of support are publicised and groups invited in.

12.8 PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

Discrimination towards learners or staff on the grounds of pregnancy is seen to be of equal weighting and every commitment is made to ensure support and legal requirements are met. Support for learners is available specifically through the pastoral system, including any potential child protection issues, and counselling service. It is seen as essential to ensure learners are able to fulfil their achievement and cases will be treated on an individual basis with appropriate adaptations made. Maternity provision for staff, including parental leave for adoption, follows all legal requirements and is also treated on an individual basis with support, including flexible working, in place to ensure re-integration into the workplace.

12.9 MARRIAGE

There will be no discrimination based on marital status whereby those staff who are in a civil partnership can expect the same rights and benefits as married employees. This includes the right to flexible working, training, paternity/maternity/parental pay and leave, and pensions.

12.10 SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Although there is no requirement under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality and tackle discrimination related to economic background, when we have a consistent percentage of learners at Ashton Sixth Form College of about 50% who come from ward uplift areas, this is essential in our strategic planning and delivery. Furthermore, is the emerging measure of Pupil Premium as a 'disadvantaged' indicator. Working with partnership colleges and the local authority one of our main priorities is to develop our tracking of our students in this category.

We make a firm commitment to support learners who may be disadvantaged due to their economic circumstances with wrap-around learning support and facilities. We prioritise our own bursary scheme to help those who are most in need of financial support.

Another key aspect for socio-economically disadvantaged learners is in raising aspirations. To develop this area, we have a dedicated officer whose role is to widen the learners' outlook and aims to include the Russell group universities. We have also formed a partnership with Pembroke College, Oxford to specifically encourage learners to aspire to Oxbridge and remove some of the barriers that they may perceive.

13 ACTION PLAN TO ADVANCE EQUALITY

The actions resulting from self-assessment to continue improving equality for all at Ashton Sixth Form College are embedded into the following:

- Equality Objectives (updated/adjusted annually) - published on the college website

- Cross College Self-Assessment Report – clearly identified as equality & diversity in relevant sections (updated annually.)
- Subject areas Self-Assessment Reports – identified by EDI (updated annually.)
- Equality & Diversity report to governors– thorough review of all data and resulting actions annually. A summarised version of the headline data is in the public domain through the website.

Other relevant College documents that relate to advancing equality include:

- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
- Prevent Strategy
- Student Conduct Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Chaplaincy Guidelines
- Admissions Policy
- Examinations Policy

14 RESPONSIBILITIES

14.1 Principal & Deputy Principal

- To ensure that the Ashton Sixth Form College Equality Scheme is accurate, thus enabling Ashton Sixth Form College to fulfil its legislative duties through the Scheme.
- To ensure that actions to promote equality, tackle discrimination and foster good relations are embedded into strategic planning and documentation including the cross college self-assessment report.

14.2 Governing Body

- To ratify the Equality Scheme as a legal document and monitor the progress of advancing equality, tackling discrimination and fostering good relations through the annual Equality & Diversity report.
- To stretch and challenge staff and managers to deliver on the equality objectives and to ensure that they progress the college equality policy

14.3 Senior Leadership Team

- Equality & Diversity Line Manager to supervise Equality & Diversity Coordinator with preparing data, Equality & Diversity Report to Governors, developing reporting and cross college equality and diversity activities.
- It is the role of the Assistant Principals to review subject Self-Assessment Reports and ensure that they reflect the Equality Scheme and deliver on the college equality objectives with appropriate actions to advance equality.
- Assistant Principal Student Services to monitor the embedding of equality and diversity into the pastoral programme.
- Ensure that all new and revised policies, proposals, procedures and plans support the aims of the Equality Duty. Ensure that equality analysis is integral to all decision, policies and procedures in line with equality legislation.

14.4 Head of Subject

- To proactively monitor success rates and value added; by national origin, nationality and ethnic origin, gender, disability/ability and other Protected Characteristics within their courses.
- To implement appropriate actions to redress any imbalance highlighted by equality/academic data.
- To ensure that course materials are proactively audited for bias, sensitivity towards disadvantaged groups and opportunities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion are utilised to full effect.

14.5 Support Area Managers

- To embed relevant actions to advance equality, tackle discrimination and foster good relations into their Self-Assessment Reports.
- To understand how important their role is in ensuring that Ashton Sixth Form College is fully inclusive for staff, learners and potential learners from all backgrounds. Monitoring publicity, resources, interaction with learners and accommodation is central to the wellbeing of all groups.

14.6 All Staff

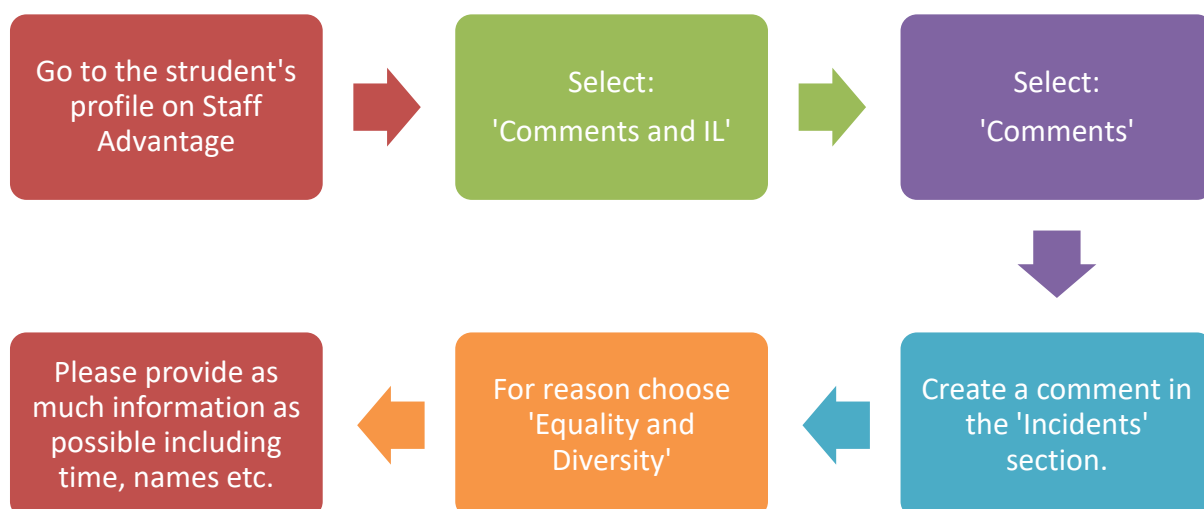
- To be aware of the Equality Scheme and its importance in improving the experience of learners from all groups attending college.
- To be proactive in valuing, accepting and understanding different groups within curriculum design, planning and delivery. To challenge discriminatory behaviour, including intolerant views, actions and language at all times, firmly embedding equality and diversity into all policies, practice and procedures.
- Support staff to proactively challenge any discriminatory behaviour and promote tolerance as relevant to their role.

15 STAFF GUIDE TO REPORTING OF EQUALITY & DIVERSITY INCIDENTS

15.1 Student Related

If the incident involves language then the first step is to challenge it within the learning environment as you see appropriate, which may be that the learner needs to be spoken to in a one to one situation. Reinforce the college expectations of appropriate use of language and explain that their comments contravene our policies of tolerance and inclusion for all regardless of their race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, any disability or learning difficulty or age.

Should the circumstances of the issue persist, then the incident needs reporting on Staff Advantage using the following steps:



If the incident involves physical contact, an element of bullying or harassment then it needs to be reported immediately at the first occasion and should also include a member of the senior tutor team.

College disciplinary procedures will then be put in place as appropriate to the level of the incident.

Please remember that there needs to be an element of racism, sexism, anti-disability attitude, religious prejudice, ageism or homophobia for the incident to come through to the Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator. All other incidents need to be reported to tutors/ senior tutors in the usual way.

15.2 Site related

If the incident is not directly related to a student, eg. racist/ homophobic graffiti then please use the 'report a job to site staff' section of the staff intranet. This will then be referred to the Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator.

15.3 Staff Related

If you observe a member of staff contravening our Equality & Diversity policies and the expectation of acceptance and inclusion at Ashton Sixth Form College towards all members of its community, then please communicate this to the Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator. You may choose how this information is communicated, face to face, through a letter or electronically. All information will be treated confidentially and, if applicable, appropriate human resource policies will be referred to and suitable measures taken to rectify the situation.