



**DIVERSITY**



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Single Equality Scheme  
2020



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## SECTION 1

### Overview of Single Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme

Welcome to the Darlington College Equality Scheme. Darlington College is committed to an equality of opportunity that is intended to be an integral part of College life. The aim is to create an environment in which people treat each other with mutual respect, regardless of age, disability, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and other relevant criteria. We, the College are therefore committed to promoting diversity and equality of opportunity for all staff and potential staff, students and potential students, contractors, employers and partner organisations, volunteers and visitors to the College.

This Equality Scheme and its associated procedures is intended to set out our commitment to equality and diversity and to demonstrate that equality and diversity are at the heart of what we do. It is based on the knowledge that discrimination exists today and that discrimination prevents people from realising their full potential. Covering the period of 2017-2020 the scheme and its associated procedures support us in our strategic objectives and vision and values and applies to all staff and students.

#### **MISSION**

To be a centre of excellence for education and skills that supports and inspires people to achieve their aspirations and prepares them for their next steps in life.

#### **VISION**

In order to achieve this, the College will:

- Develop a culture of values centred around high expectations and focus on our students
- Support wider economic and social well-being, developing an offer that meets the needs of individual, the local economy, businesses and communities
- Develop a successful and sustainable independent college, that remains open to collaboration and partnership
- Maintain a broad and appropriate curriculum offer at our campus in Darlington for the benefit of communities across Darlington, North Yorkshire and South West Durham
- Achieve long-term financial sustainability that allows us to continue to invest – in our facilities and our staff – for the benefit of our students, their learning, and their future

#### **VALUES**

##### ***Community***

It is important to us that the college remains at the heart of our wider community. It is also important to us that we maintain our strong sense of community within the college, valuing our culture of teamwork and respect.

##### ***Pride and passion***

We all work with pride and passion for our students, celebrating their achievements, and working towards high expectations and continued excellence in everything we do.

### ***Student focus***

We are committed to being student-focused, and our ambition is for our students to achieve to the highest level they possibly can. We also put a high value on our reputation as a college with a caring and friendly environment that is second to none.

### ***Inclusion***

It is important to us that the College is inclusive, widening opportunities for the future and maximising the potential of all our learners. Our social purpose matters to us.

## **Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Vision, Values and Aims**

Darlington College is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and learning regardless of a person's age; gender; disability; religion/belief; ethnicity; sexual orientation; transgender; marriage/civil partnership or pregnancy/maternity.

The college website is designed to be fully accessible. If you have any comments or queries, or would like any information supplied in alternative formats such as braille, please do not hesitate to contact us email [marketing@darlington.ac.uk](mailto:marketing@darlington.ac.uk)

For more information on how we support learners with disabilities, please see our [Additional Learning Support section](#).

## **Equality Objectives (2017-2020)**

- Advance the Equality and Diversity Agenda through staff training: regular sessions including CPD days; induction; equality and diversity events throughout the academic year.
  - A target of 100% staff completion for Equality and Diversity training has been set.
  - This will be evidenced by staff training records and event reports.
- Identify any achievement gaps associated with gender and ethnicity and reduce the gap by 5% year on year.
  - Evidence of this will be Termly Equality and Diversity reports.
- Recruit and retain governors and staff who reflect the student population about ethnicity.
  - Evidence of this will be in the College Self-Assessment reports.

## **The Legislation**

The Equality Act 2010 is the key piece of legislation that is central to our Equality Scheme.

### **Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 incorporates 116 pieces of legislation into one Act. It provides a new cross-cutting legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all; to update, simplify, modern and accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

From 1st October 2010, the following provisions under the Act come into force:

- The basic framework of protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in services and public functions; premises; work; education; associations and transport.
- Changing the definition of gender re-assignment by removing the requirement for medical supervision.
- Levelling up protection for people discriminated against because they are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic, so providing a new protection for people like carers.
- Clearer protection for breastfeeding mothers.
- Applying the European definition of indirect discrimination to all protected characteristics (previously called 'strands').
- Extending protection from indirect discrimination to disability.
- Introducing a new concept of "discrimination arising from disability", to replace protection under previous legislation lost as a result of a legal judgement.
- Applying the detriment model to victimisation protection (aligning with the approach in employment law).
- Harmonising the thresholds for the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.
- Extending protection from 3rd party harassment to all protected characteristics.
- Making it more difficult for disabled people to be unfairly screened out when applying for jobs, by restricting the circumstances in which employers can ask job applicants questions about disability or health.
- Allowing claims for direct gender pay discrimination where there is no actual comparator.
- Making pay secrecy clauses unenforceable.
- Extending protection in private clubs to sex, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender re-assignment.
- Introducing new powers for employment tribunals to make recommendations which benefit the wider workforce.
- Harmonising provisions allowing voluntary positive action.

## SECTION 2 - PURPOSE

The purpose of our Equality Scheme is to:

- Demonstrate how we have involved different equality target groups in decisions we have made
- Find out what barriers are faced by different equality target groups and take steps to remove them
- Find out what different equality target groups need and which of these needs are the most important to them
- Ensure that we fulfil our legal obligations
- Highlight what our responsibilities are, which includes informing governors, employees, students and potential students and our partners
- Demonstrate how the Scheme links to other equalities objectives and priorities
- Provide information about our involvement, impact assessments and training arrangements

- Highlight changes that need to be made and develop a three-year Equality Action Plan on how we will put the Scheme into practice
- Monitor and fully review the Equality Scheme each year

## SECTION 3 - POLICY STATEMENTS

We believe that all forms of prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable. In recognition of the fact that they can take a variety of forms, depending on the group against whom they are directed, the College Equality and Diversity Policy will embody the issues specific to discrimination on the grounds of:

- Disability
- Gender
- Race
- Religion/Belief
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Transgender
- Pregnancy/maternity
- Marriage/civil partnership

### Disability

We will make reasonable adjustment to arrangements, facilities and support in order for a person with a disability to participate in the recruitment and selection process or learning experience. This includes potential staff and students with physical or mental impairments as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act.

In support of this statement we will:

- Value positively learners' achievements and support them to realise their full potential
- Give appropriate opportunities for disclosure of disabilities or learning difficulties
- Assess all potential learners or job applicants on their individual merits and their ability to undertake employment/training/education successfully
- Provide an inclusive learning experience which is challenging, intensive and adds clear value
- Provide reasonable adjustments to enable disabled staff to work and develop in their posts
- Encourage and enable learners to progress and to achieve appropriate outcomes
- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure learners with disabilities are supported
- Celebrate success of learners and staff
- Provide training and support for staff
- Actively tackle discrimination and promote equality
- Provide diverse images in any material which it produces for learners and staff
- Assess the impact of its policies on learners and staff with different disabilities and learning difficulties
- Set out the College's arrangements for publishing the results of assessments and monitoring
- Publish annually the results of assessments and monitoring, where reasonably practicable
- Provide accessible information to learners where reasonably practicable
- Conduct inclusive risk assessments and take positive action

## Gender

Our aim is to create a supportive environment for men and women, which is conducive to excellent practice in education, training and employment.

In support of this statement we will:

- Take positive action to work towards creating equality of opportunity in all areas of College activity for learners and potential learners, employees and potential employees
- Encourage applications from potential learners and potential employees into non-traditional areas of work or study so that gender stereotyping becomes the exception
- Work towards addressing gender imbalance in some areas of work and/or learning
- Provide diverse images in any material which it produces for learners and staff
- Raise the awareness of learners regarding gender equality and stereotypes
- Assess the impact of its policies on learners and staff in terms of gender
- Set out our for publishing the results of assessments and monitoring
- Publish annually the results of assessments and monitoring, where reasonably practicable
- Actively tackle discrimination and promote equality

## Race and Ethnicity

We seek to create a working and learning environment based on positive relations between members of different racial groups. The aim is to create a positive inclusive ethos with a shared commitment to respecting diversity and difference and to encouraging good relations between people of different races.

In support of this we will:

- Provide training and support for staff
- Actively tackle racial discrimination and promote racial equality and good race relations
- Provide diverse images in any material which it produces for learners and staff
- Raise the awareness of learners and staff of race equality and stereotypes
- Assess the impact of its policies on learners and staff from different racial groups
- Monitor the admission and progress of learners and the recruitment and career progress of staff by racial groups
- Set out our arrangements for publishing the results of assessments and monitoring
- Publish annually the results of assessments and monitoring where reasonably practicable

## Religion

We respect the rights of individuals to hold different religious or philosophical beliefs.

In support of this we will:

- Work to create a learning environment which is welcoming and supportive of people of all religious beliefs
- Respect and, where necessary, provide for the practices which support the religious beliefs of learners and/or employees where practicable
- Provide diverse images in materials it produces for learners and staff
- Raise the awareness of learners and staff with regard to religious equality and stereotypes
- Actively tackle discrimination and promote equality

## **Sexual Orientation**

We believe that a person's sexuality does not have any bearing on their ability or suitability for employment or learning opportunities

In support of this we will:

- Encourage an openness of approach to all potential job applicants and learners
- Raise awareness and understanding of staff and learners regarding sexual orientation
- Respect the sexual orientation of all employees and learners
- Actively tackle discrimination and promote equality

## **Age**

We respect people of all ages and believe that age does not necessarily have any bearing on ability or suitability for employment or learning opportunities.

In support of this we will:

- Actively tackle age discrimination and promote age equality
- Carefully consider requests to work beyond retirement age
- Set out our arrangements for publishing the results of assessments and monitoring
- Publish annually the results of assessments and monitoring where reasonably practicable

## **Transgender**

We believe that a person's gender reassignment does not have any bearing on their ability to suitability for employment or learning opportunities.

In support of this we will:

- Encourage an openness of approach to all potential job applicants and learners
- Raise awareness and understanding of staff and learners regarding transgender
- Actively tackle discrimination and promote equality

## **Pregnancy/Maternity**

Our aim is to create a supportive environment for men and women, which is conducive to excellent practice in education, training and employment.

In support of this we will:

- Take positive action to work towards creating equality of opportunity in all areas of College activity for learners and potential learners, employees and potential employees
- Ensure protection of women against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled.
- From 1st October 2010, a student who is pregnant or has given birth within the last 26 weeks is explicitly protected from unfavourable treatment.
- Provide breastfeeding facilities in college.

## **Marriage/Civil Partnership**

We aim to provide an inclusive and supportive environment for both men and women regardless of marital status.

In support of this we will:



- Take positive action to work towards creating equality of opportunity in all areas of College activity for learners and potential learners, employees and potential employees

## **SECTION 4 - EQUALITY PRINCIPLES REGARDING EMPLOYMENT**

In seeking to achieve a balanced workforce at all levels, we 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 employees or potential employees who are disabled.

In order to ensure that all employees and potential employees are treated with equality and fairness at all stages of employment and that their treatment is based solely on objective and job related criteria, we will ensure that equality issues are embedded into all its policies and procedures.

Support to employees will be available through the HR and Training team as well as via normal line management.

Publish information relating to Gender Pay Gaps and seek to reduce gaps in accordance with Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

## **SECTION 5 - EQUALITY PRINCIPLES WITHIN TEACHING AND LEARNING**

We will aim to make courses accessible to as wide a range of students as possible via increased flexibility, open/distance learning courses and outreach provision in accordance with the philosophy and practice of inclusive learning.

We will provide impartial educational careers guidance and counselling to all students and ensure that students receive appropriate learning support to meet their individual needs.

Support to students will be available through their Personal Tutor, Student Support or the Guidance Team. Alternatively, students may seek advice from the College Counselling Service. Specific support will be provided where reasonably practicable to enable a learner with a difficulty/disability to use particular facilities or services.

## **SECTION 6 – RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SCHEME**

The Principal and Chief Executive has overall responsibility for equality issues.

The Principal and Chief Executive and the Executive team are responsible for ensuring that the Scheme is put into action throughout the College.

There is an Equality and Diversity Committee chaired by the Deputy Principal. The membership of the group includes representation from Additional Learning Support, curriculum areas, student support and business support areas.

The focus of the group is to promote policies and practices that ensure a College environment in which equality flourishes. To this end, it will encourage and support the development of policies related to the curriculum, learner intake, the built environment, student services etc. which seek to ensure the removal of prejudice and discrimination.

It is the responsibility of all employees and students to uphold the College policy on equality and diversity. Employment policies and procedures will continue to be dealt with through existing consultation/negotiation arrangements, as appropriate.

## SECTION 7 - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EIAS)

At the College we need to understand whether our services are meeting everyone's needs and that people who need our services have access to them. To help us to do this we carry out Equality Impact Assessments, where we feel a potential decision or direction of the college may inadvertently impact on a group or groups of individuals.

### **What are Equality Impact Assessments?**

An Equality Impact Assessment is a way of deciding whether an existing or proposed policy, procedure, practice or service does (or may) affect people differently and if so, whether it affects them in an adverse way.

We recognise that carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment will assist us in ensuring College activities do not have an adverse impact on specific groups or limit our opportunity to promote equality of opportunity.

EIA will be based around the following questions:

- Is there any evidence of a lower participation, progression or completion rate of an equality target group compared to others?
- Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to a particular policy?
- Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies create problems that are particular to them?
- Is there any opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations between groups by altering the policy or working with others?

A summary of the results of the Equality Impact Assessments, Action Plans and consultation exercises will be reported as part of the annual review of the Equality Scheme.

## SECTION 8 - MONITORING

We undertake to conduct comprehensive and effective monitoring of all aspects of staffing and the student body.

A review of progress will be made through the monitoring of data, analysis and evaluation of results of monitoring, surveys, the annual reports to the Executive and through the College self-assessment process.

The Equality and Diversity Reports include the results of the analysis and evaluation of data for staff and students by gender, disability, race, religion and age.

## SECTION 9 - EMPLOYMENT

We are committed to the collection of statistics, analysis of data and presentation of data as well as monitoring on an ongoing basis as employment policy and practices change.

We will use the two main forms of monitoring, ie the composition of the existing workforce and the recruitment process; looking at the workforce with reference to race, religion, disability, age and gender.

We plan also to categorise employees according to grade; contract type, i.e. whether full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary; length of time in post; place of work and salary. Records will also be kept of training and appraisals.

After the employment relationship has ended, we may retain statistics; data about the composition of the workforce, including appraisal records for the purpose of carrying out equal opportunities monitoring and may also look at reasons for resignation and resignation rates.

## SECTION 10 - STUDENTS

We will monitor all students in order to inform the setting of targets and the measurement of our progress in achieving them. In particular, the age, gender, disability and racial group profile of students will be monitored with reference to:

- Retention rates
- Achievement rates
- Disciplinary action and complaints

### ***In summary monitoring and evaluation is carried out through:***

- Collection of data, in accordance with data protection, on the ethnic background, sex, disability and age
- Analysis of the data
- Data is benchmarked against local and national data from the 2011 Census
- Comparing analysis of monitoring with previous years' – progress check
- Learner surveys
- Staff surveys
- Retention data
- Lesson observations
- Curriculum audits
- Consultative meetings
- Quality assurance procedures and self-assessment reports
- Reviews of formal complaints received
- Monitoring reports to the Corporation Board

## SECTION 11 - PUBLISHING RESULTS OF ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

We are committed to both seeking the views of and involving staff, students and relevant organisations in the planning processes for equality and diversity. This may include the following:

- Conducting focus groups
- Involving staff, students and relevant organisations in impact assessment
- Staff and student surveys
- Class representatives' meetings
- Consulting with internal support groups

## SECTION 12 - DISABILITY ACCESS AUDITS

The purpose of a disability access audit is to find out what barriers disabled people face to accessing services. These barriers could exist for a number of reasons such as:

- The lack of a policy relating to monitoring accessible parking

- The lack of auxiliary aids such as an induction loop for hearing aid users
- The lack of adequate access into a building such as the provision of a ramp for wheelchair users

If any barriers are identified, we will then consider ways of removing them. This is known as ‘making reasonable adjustments’.

## SECTION 13 - ACCESS TO LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT

We encourage potential students and employees to let us know as early as possible if they need support. Students can do this on their application form before they start their studies at the College. This will give us the maximum time available to make arrangements. Students can ask for assistance during their first visit to the College when we will show them the buildings in order to identify any accessibility problems. After the first visit we can offer a more detailed assessment and prepare a support plan which will meet their individual needs. However, if students feel that they need support after starting their course, they can still contact us at any time or speak with their tutor.

Employees who disclose a disability and need support to have reasonable adjustments made will be invited to discuss these with HR and Training. An individual risk assessment will be carried out and if necessary, advice will be taken from Occupational Health. A report with recommendations will then be made and where appropriate Access to Work will be consulted about specialist resources and funding. The reasonable adjustments will then be put in place for the employee. Support from HR and Training and the line manager will then be given.

### ***Examples of adjustments for students:***

- Extra tuition through one-to-one and small group work
- Support for specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia
- Learning Support Assistants attending classes to help with work
- Help with personal care needs, both inside and outside the classroom
- Help with sensory impairments
- Note takers
- Reader/note taker
- Counselling
- Special arrangements for examinations/assessments
- Computers with specialised software
- Spell checkers and thesauruses
- Dictaphones
- Specialist monitors and keyboards
- Voice input software, e.g. Dragon Dictate
- Screen reading software for blind/low vision computer users
- Scanners and digital cameras
- Radio hearing aid
- Magnifiers, glare guards
- Hearing loops
- Specialist advice and support. We also have links with a range of agencies.
- Specialist software such as Read, Write, Gold
- Hub for maths and English

## **SECTION 14 - CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

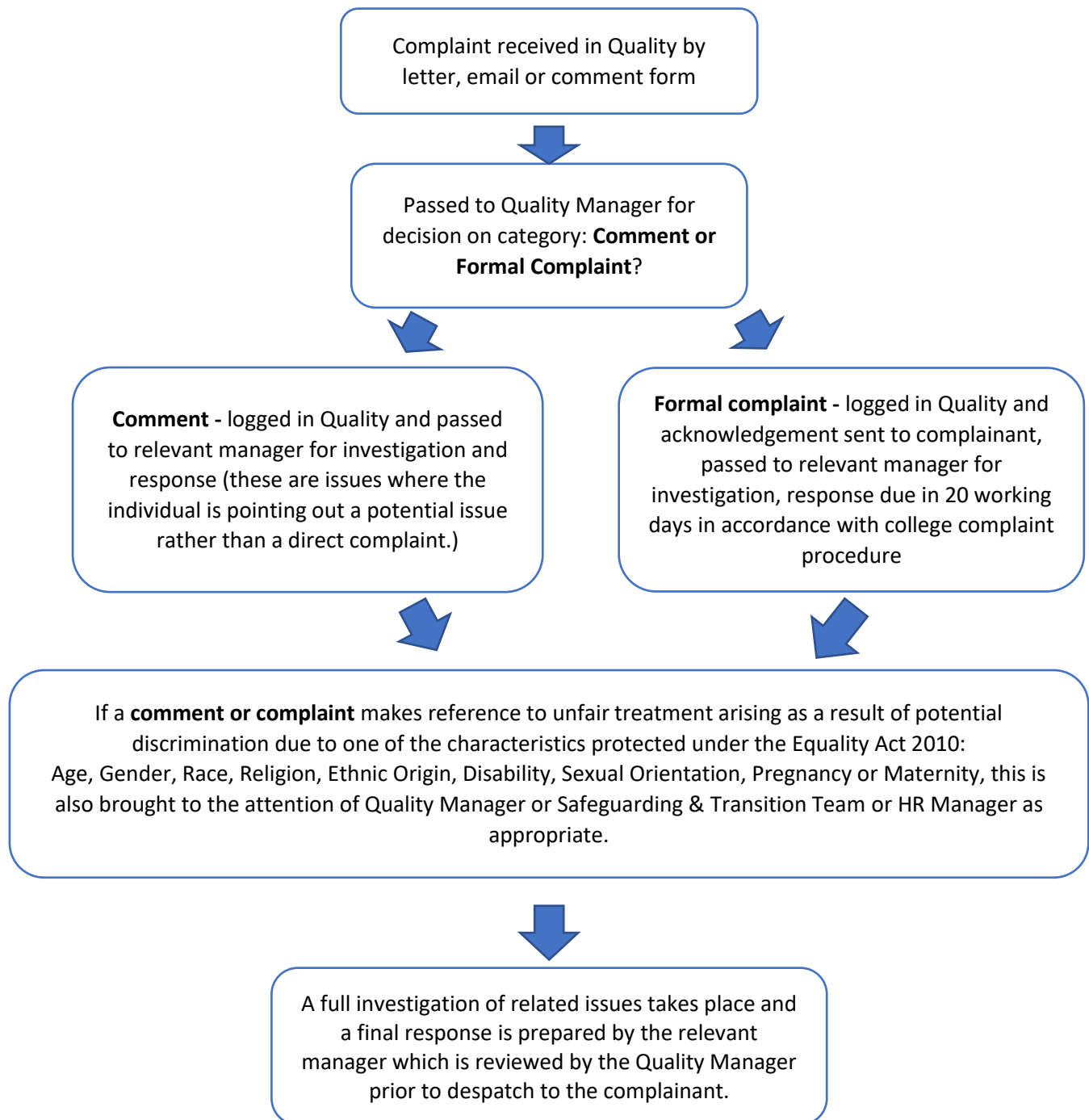
We are committed to providing training and development to all staff. Training needs are identified via appraisals and meetings with line managers – as well as by staff suggestion. We offer a rolling annual CPD programme, together with a dedicated annual programme of relevant development activities. Attendance is recorded and monitored and the training is evaluated and analysed for quality and cost effectiveness.

## **SECTION 15 – COMPLAINTS**

The college strives to create a working and learning environment that promotes dignity and respect for all. Any occasion where standards fall below the colleges high expectations or any complaint or concerns regarding unfair treatment under the Single Equality Scheme will be fully investigated and appropriate action taken.

We recognise that many concerns/issues can be resolved by informal discussions or simply by providing clarity, thus we would encourage individuals to contact us informally in the first instance to discuss issues. However, if the concerns are such that they feel that a more formal consideration of the situation is needed, then further information on the above policies/procedure are available on the College intranet site and briefly illustrated in the diagram below:

# PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH FORMAL COMPLAINTS INCLUDING EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY RELATED ISSUES



## NOTE:

**Curriculum Incidents:** Whilst all formal complaints are dealt with in Quality, informal complaints are dealt with by Student Services and Safeguarding Manager.

If Curriculum Staff are made aware of bullying or inappropriate behaviour which may include verbal abuse or cyber bullying, then this is dealt with via the student support teams. All incidents of bullying are logged with Student Services and Safeguarding Manager.

**Staff Incidents:** All incidents involving inappropriate behaviour of staff in relation to Equality and Diversity are referred to Human Resources to action.