



POLICY:	Equality Policy
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FIRST DRAFT:	
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ADOPTED:	BR 2014#02
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AMENDMENTS:	
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REVIEW:	
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline Mary Immaculate College's commitment to equality in all aspects of the College's activity: employment, education and service provision; and to outline how this policy will be implemented.

The College aims to provide an inclusive environment which promotes equality, values and diversity – and is committed to maintaining an environment of dignity and respect where all staff and students can develop their full potential. The concept of equality is central to the College's ethos of academic and service excellence.

Mary Immaculate College is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to the continued development of employment policies, procedures and practices which do not discriminate on grounds in accordance with legislation.

This policy outlines the actions the College will take to identify and remove any barriers to accessing and participating in the College as a student or staff member or service user.

All policies, guidelines and protocols of Mary Immaculate College, will reflect the College's commitment to the promotion of equality and will be fully compliant with the provisions of prevailing equality legislation.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy is developed in the context of the Employment Equality Act 1998-2011, the Disability Act 2005 and the Equal Status Act 2000-2012 which prohibit direct and indirect discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment and victimisation in relation to the nine equality grounds. This policy reflects the College's commitment to meet its obligations under these Acts.

This policy applies to:

All applicants for employment, employees and all those who work for the College and relates to all decisions in relation to recruitment and selection, promotion, access to training and terms and conditions of employment.

All students and student applicants and relates to all decisions in respect of the admission of students and the provision of all services to students including teaching and supervision, assessment, progression and award and support services.

All staff, students, stakeholders and service providers of the College and relates to all services provided by the College in its diverse activities both internal and external.

3 Statement of Commitment

3.1 The College is committed to:

- Non-discrimination (direct or indirect) in access and participation in education and employment in relation to any of the nine equality grounds.
- Ensuring that services provided are free from discrimination and harassment.
- Supporting an inclusive environment of dignity and respect where all staff and students can develop their full potential. Will not tolerate harassment or bullying of staff, students or other members of the College community
- A programme which will seek to identify barriers to equality and full participation and imbalances within College practices where they exist, and take action to redress these.
- Providing integrated accessible services and information to people with and without disabilities. Will seek to ensure that information is produced in accessible information formats.
- Providing reasonable accommodation to staff, students, stakeholders and service providers with disabilities. Supporting the employment of staff with disabilities.
- Widening participation and facilitating access to its programmes by students from under-represented groups and by mature students [as per the College Strategic Plan 2012-2016].
- Developing positive action measures to support particular groups who may be disadvantaged or under-represented in accessing education, employment or promotion where appropriate.
- Accommodating diversity in service provision across all 9 equality grounds where practicable.

3.2 Other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant College guidelines, policies and procedures, including:

- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Recruitment procedures
- Policies & Procedures for Dealing with Staff Grievances
- Procedure for Complaints by a Student
- Policy & Procedure for Complaints by Staff

4. Equality in Employment (staff)

This section outlines how the College's commitments to equality, non-discrimination and equal access and participation apply to the College's employment practices and procedures.

5. Equality in Service Provision (students, stakeholders and service providers)

This section outlines how the College's commitments to equality, non-discrimination and to equal access and participation apply to the College's educational and other services.

The College will ensure equality of access and opportunity for students and will ensure its admissions process, assessment and other procedures do not discriminate directly or indirectly against any student in relation to any of the nine equality grounds.

The College will seek to provide high quality services in an inclusive, accessible and flexible manner to staff, students and stakeholders of the College.

6. Implementation

6.1 Responsibility

The President of the College is responsible for the management and control of the affairs of the College, subject to the provisions of the Instrument of Government. An tÚdarás Rialaithe has appointed an Equality Committee charged with responsibility for the development and monitoring of policies and practices in relation to equality.

Each area that provides a service, academic, student service or other type of service, has the responsibility to ensure the service provided upholds the commitments outlined in this policy.

Senior Office Holders, Heads of Departments, Line Managers, Supervisors and others in positions of authority should seek to ensure that the equality policy is upheld in respect of staff, students, stakeholders and service providers and other members of the College community.

All members of the College community play a role in implementing this policy. All students, service users and others conducting business with the College should cooperate with the implementation of this policy. Business contracts will reflect this requirement.

Specific targets for the participation of under-represented students have been set in the College's Strategic Plan.

The Equality Committee is responsible for reviewing the implementation of this policy regularly and for proposing to An tÚdarás Rialaithe any amendments to the policy.

6.2 Communications

Communication with the College Community:

Information

Materials produced by the College will be provided in a relevant and accessible manner to the College Community and service users across the nine equality grounds.

Advertising and marketing

Advertising and marketing strategies will be non-discriminatory and communicate the College's commitment to equality and diversity.

Direct contact

The College will seek to ensure that in its direct contact, students, staff and service users are treated in a courteous and professional manner consistent with an environment of dignity and respect.

6.3 Equality Infrastructure

The Equality Committee will support the implementation of this policy. The Equality Committee is a sub-Committee of An tÚdarás Rialaithe with staff and student representation.

The Human Resources Office and the Student's Union President are members of and have an advisory role to the Equality Committee and will support the College in implementing this policy, liaising with relevant departments and services and providing advice to staff and students on the contents of this policy.

6.4 Equality and Diversity awareness

The College will implement equality and diversity training and awareness programmes in order to ensure the implementation throughout College of this Equality policy with regard to employment and service delivery.

The Equality Committee has a particular responsibility with regard to these commitments.

6.5. Business contracts

The College will seek to ensure that all Third Parties from whom it has contracted to receive goods and services are aware that this policy is in place and that these companies are expected to comply with it. Breach of this policy or the Dignity and Respect policy will constitute grounds to suspend the contract.

6.6 Monitoring and review

The Equality Committee will report on the overall implementation of this policy in its reports to An tÚdarás Rialaithe.

7. Further Information

7.1 All queries relating to the implementation of this policy should be referred to the Equality Committee.

8. Audit and Evaluation

8.1 This policy will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis. The Equality Committee will initiate the review.