



# Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

MidKent College and MKCTS, Ltd

2016-2019



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## 1. Introduction

### About MidKent College

MidKent College aspires to pursuing excellence in the services it provides and staff are an essential factor in helping achieve this. The college is delighted to receive external recognition for its investment in staff, as well as its support for students, and has been recognised as an 'Investor in People'. MidKent College also holds the Matrix award for Information, Advice and Guidance.

The College have held an Investors in Diversity award since 2009. In December 2015, we were successfully awarded the Investors in Diversity Standard, Stage II with the Advisor reporting that:

"I personally feel confident that the College and its leadership have always been extremely committed to diversity and inclusion. ... The College has some excellent practice in place for both staff and learners and always provides a welcoming environment to visitors."

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at MidKent College

It is MidKent College's vision to provide a learning and working environment which celebrates diversity and protects students and staff from any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The college recognises the educational and business benefits of having a diverse community of staff and students.

The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy represents a commitment from the College to take firm action to redress inequality, to celebrate diversity and promote inclusion in all of our activities. This strategy sets out our core objectives for meeting our public sector equality duties, and provides a detailed plan of the steps we intend to take to advance equality, diversity and inclusion

This strategy seeks to meet the general duties imposed on the College by legislation and sector guidance but will go further to include good practice in all areas of equality, diversity and inclusion. MidKent College aims to go beyond our legal requirements and to optimise the life chances and success of all users of the College. In particular, we will ensure that young people are developing in circumstances consistent with the principles of equality and the provision of safe and effective care, regardless of their legally protected characteristic or socio economic circumstance.

We aim to be aware of our own conscious and unconscious biases, prejudices and stereotypes, and to mitigate the effect of unconscious or implicit bias on our decision



making. All staff have a duty to contribute constructively to equality, diversity and inclusion.

## **2. MidKent College Vision and Values**

MidKent College's Vision, Values and Priorities play a vital role in embedding equality, diversity and inclusion so that it is an essential part of every aspect of college life. Furthermore, they embody the goals and objectives of the organisation and form the foundation of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

### **Our Vision**

"Everyone is proud to recommend MidKent College to family and friends. It is a great place to learn and work, where all students and staff feel part of the College community."

### **Our Values (Hearts and Minds)**

Passion

Pride

Purpose

Resilience

## **3. MidKent College Vision, Values and Strategic Priorities**

Equality, diversity and inclusion are about more than just meeting our legal obligations. It is about making a positive difference to the lives of the people we serve in the way we work each day, treating all people with dignity and respect and recognising the value of each individual as a unique member of the College community: our students, our staff, contractors and visitors. The College has a clear vision and a set of core values which enables it to commit to eliminating inequitable treatment, advancing equality of opportunity for all and fostering good relations between different people throughout the organisation.

### **Strategic Priorities 2016-2019**

- Teaching - We will provide first-rate teaching and learning
- Curriculum - Our curriculum will improve the employment prospects of all our students
- Community - We will engage actively with our community



- MKCTS - We will secure the work we do with RSME and develop other activities from it
- Future - We will develop strategies to ensure our long term success

## Legislative Context

### The Equality Act

The Equality Act 2010 is the overarching equality legislation in the UK. The Act makes discrimination unlawful across many areas of activity, including employment and the provision of further and higher education. [Technical guidance on the Act](#) for further education providers is available from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

The Act covers nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

We recognise that an individual may have a number of these characteristics. The Equality Act 2010 also sets out the framework for the Public Sector Equality Duty. Under the general duty MidKent College has a legal responsibility to have due regard to the following matters when exercising its functions:

- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and person who do not share it, and
- The need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Under the Specific Public Sector Equality Duty, public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status.

## **Human Rights and PREVENT Duty**

MidKent College also aims to protect and preserve the rights and freedoms that belong to everyone regardless of their nationality and citizenship. We believe that human rights are fundamentally important in maintaining a fair and civilised society. This is in line with the Human Rights Act 1998, and the 16 rights and freedoms it upholds. We will also fulfil all duties placed on us by the PREVENT Duty (Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015).

## **British Values**

The British Government defined its concept of 'British Values' in its 2011 PREVENT Strategy, and since 2014 the Department for Education has required all colleges to "promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs".

At MidKent College we recognise that understandings of Britishness should be as inclusive as possible, and care must therefore be taken to challenge and remove negative and demeaning stereotypes of certain groups and communities.

With these values in mind, at MidKent College we aim to:

- Help students to become valuable and rounded members of society who treat others with respect and tolerance, regardless of background
- Promote the basic British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different beliefs and faiths to students
- Ensure young people understand the importance of respect and leave college fully prepared for life in modern Britain
- Celebrate difference and promote diversity
- Encourage an understanding of the difficulties other cultures face where such values are not respected

We are also taking action to:

- Embed different materials about British Values into different college curriculum areas
- Ensure that all our students have a voice that is listened to and valued and demonstrate how democracy works through promoting Student Voice and encouraging students to feedback to us through Student Surveys, student ambassadors and the student representatives
- Use opportunities such as general elections and debates to promote British Values and help students to argue and defend different points of view

- Actively consult with our student representatives to gather student views and feedback on key college policies that effect the student body
- Encourage student participation in working with the wider community and commemorating key events to gain an understanding of how British values have evolved
- Encourage students to become responsible learners and to actively participate in their own learning and development

## **Safeguarding**

We provide students, staff, contractors and visitors with a safe environment to study, work and visit and fulfil our safeguarding duties.

## **Reporting**

The Equality Act general duty is underpinned by specific duties to assist organisations to meet the general duty. To meet all these pieces of legislation, Further and Higher Education Colleges are required to: -

- Publish information annually by the 31 January, so others can judge how effective the organisation is in meeting the general duty
- Publish equality objectives at least every four years
- Assess the impact of all policies on staff and students -
- Monitor the admission and progression of students and the recruitment and progression of staff
- Publish the results of the monitoring undertaken

## **4. MidKent College's Equality Objectives**

MidKent College's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out our overarching objectives for equality, diversity and inclusion. These are:

### **1. Outstanding teaching and learning provision**

- Teaching, learning and assessment meets the needs of each individual student
- Every learner is given the support they need in order to succeed
- To continue to narrow any gaps in performance by different groups of students



- To embed the equality, diversity and inclusion into the student journey to ensure that students leave the college fully prepared for the diverse and multicultural world we live in
  - Student Voice activities provide opportunities for all students to be heard and kept informed on what is happening at MidKent College.
- 2. A talented and diverse workforce**
- Professional development activities are designed to advance equality, diversity and inclusion for all staff
  - Recruitment, selection and professional development activities enable all groups of staff, or potential staff, with an equal opportunity to advance their careers within an inclusive environment at MidKent College.
- 3. Active engagement with diverse local communities**
- The College engages with local community groups to support and celebrate diversity in all its forms.

Each year in our [Annual Review](#) we will set key (SMART) objectives based upon current baseline data which contribute to achieving these overarching objectives. This will allow us to ensure our actions are targeted and appropriate, reflecting the fast-changing environment in which we operate and to meet our specific duties for staff and learners.

## **5. Who is responsible for the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy?**

The **Board of Governors** is responsible for ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion plays a fundamental role in the College's strategic plan. The Board of Governors have a commitment to the College's statutory responsibilities in relation to equality legislation as an employer and service provider, and will provide leadership in the form of a Lead Governor.

The **Chief Executive Officer** and **Principal** are accountable for promoting and role modelling the principles behind the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy both inside and outside the organisation and for ensuring that all staff fulfil their role in delivering equality within MidKent College.

The **Director of Human Resources**, supported by the Diversity and Inclusion team, is responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

**The Executive Group including the Managing Director for MKCTS Ltd and Senior Leadership Teams/Heads of Faculty/ and Managers** are responsible for putting the strategy into practice and for ensuring that their staff understand and

implement the associated actions. They are also responsible for ensuring that action is taken against staff or students who discriminate for reasons of any protected characteristic (or for other factors outlined in the College's policies on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, the Dignity at Work policy or any other relevant policy).

**The Diversity and Inclusion Committee** is responsible for driving innovative equality, diversity and inclusion strategies and disseminating good practice throughout the College. They will ensure that the implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is closely monitored and that any issues are raised and effectively addressed.

**Teaching staff** are responsible for ensuring that the content of their curriculum, teaching methods and materials, classroom values and assessments promote diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusive practice. Staff will actively promote a harmonious and inclusive environment and will challenge inappropriate behaviour (whether by learners or staff).

**All employees** are responsible for promoting an inclusive working environment, and for not discriminating against anyone on any basis. This will include taking up training and learning opportunities that further this goal.

**All students** are expected to ensure that their behaviour promotes positive relationships between people of all groups. Students should also refer to the College's policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and codes of conduct for students. Support will be provided to those learners with individual support needs to enable them to access the course fully and achieve their potential.

## 6. Equality and Diversity Annual Reviews

MidKent College will publish a Diversity and Inclusion Annual Review for every academic year. This will provide equality information as required under the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duties. The annual review will be published to staff, students and the general public via the MidKent College website.

The Annual Review will aim to provide information on our equality, diversity and inclusion performance from the year. This will include a review of the key objectives and performance in achieving these, monitoring data for staff and students, and wider equality activities and performance including community engagement and staff and student involvement.

## **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

Equality impact assessment (or analysis) is a key tool which helps organisations to embed equality, diversity and inclusion so that it is central to all operations. The purpose of equality impact assessment (EIA) is to avoid negative impact from decisions or policies and identify positive opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations. Although there is no formal requirement to perform or publish equality analysis, it is a useful tool in advancing equality and diversity and ensuring inclusion and fair practice.

MidKent College carry out thorough equality analysis through various formats. A formal Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a systematic toolkit used to assess the potential positive and negative impact of a policy or procedure on each protected characteristic. These are reviewed and managed by the Quality department and Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Equality analysis is also carried out by being included into department and faculty plans, self-assessment reports, college improvement plans, and as standing agenda items for senior leadership meetings. We are aware that, to be effective, an impact assessment must be part of the decision making process.

## **8. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan**

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan supports the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy by setting out how we intend to fulfil our objectives and legal duties. It provides specific actions covering the broad range of operations of MidKent College and functions across the protected characteristics. Progress on implementation will be monitored through regular reporting to the Governing Body, the Executive Team and the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and will be included within the College's Annual Review.