
OUR COMMITMENT AND INTENT

Colchester Institute believes firmly that equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are essential factors which contribute to the academic and economic strengths of the College and the wellbeing of all students and staff.

Overview of equality legislation

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 Colchester Institute will treat all members and potential members of the College community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a safe and positive working and learning environment, free from discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

In addition, the College is committed to providing a learning and working environment that values all forms of diversity and seeks to create a culture of conscious inclusion in which issues of stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly with a shared commitment to challenging prejudice.

Public Sector general and specific duties:

The general equality duty as detailed in the Equality Act 2010 requires us to give due regard to:

- ✓ Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- ✓ Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- ✓ Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

OUR VISION AND MISSION

The Principal, Governors and senior managers have a clear vision and strategy for improving all aspects of the College's work. Senior leaders communicate the ambitions and direction of the college well to staff and students, ensuring that everyone works in alignment with its mission and values.

Our Vision

To be a vibrant, sustainable college, exceeding the expectations of all those we serve.

Our Mission

To support our local communities and to transform lives through the development of technical, professional and personal knowledge and skills.

Our Values

It matters to us that ...

- We are an **INCLUSIVE** College, welcoming employees and learners of all backgrounds, ages and abilities.
- We are **COLLABORATIVE**, working in partnership internally and externally to achieve shared goals.
- We are **RESPECTFUL** of each other in our words, actions and behaviours.
- We are **AMBITIOUS** for our learners, our staff and our College, always striving for excellence.
- We are **HONEST** and open, and act with integrity in all that we do.
- We provide a physically and emotionally **SAFE** environment, where people can be themselves, try out ideas and thrive.

OUR POLICIES

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is updated annually and was last updated in February 2025. Below is the introductory statement and the full document can be found on the College website [here](#).

Colchester Institute is committed to creating and sustaining a positive and supportive working environment for our staff, agency workers, contractors, and volunteers and an excellent teaching and learning experience for our students and apprentices, where staff and students are equally valued and respected, and encouraged to thrive. As a provider of employment and education, we value the diversity of our staff, apprentices and students. We are committed to providing a fair, equitable and mutually supportive learning and working environment for all.

This policy deals with the promotion of equity, diversity and inclusion for all at Colchester Institute (which includes University Centre Colchester) in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and in line with the Public Sector General and Specific Duties.

Our goal is to ensure that these commitments are reinforced by our Values and are embedded in our day-to-day working practices with all our students, colleagues, customers and other stakeholders.

We will not tolerate any form of discrimination based on Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, or any other grounds.

We will demonstrate our commitment by:

- promoting equality of opportunity and diversity within the College and the communities in which we work and with all of our staff, students and other stakeholders;
- building a workforce which reflects our community, with the aim of having parity of representation across the organisation;
- treating our students, colleagues and visitors fairly, equitably and with respect;

- promoting an environment free from discrimination, bullying and harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment, and consistently, swiftly and robustly tackling behaviour which breaches this, using approved College procedures;
- recognising and valuing the differences and individual contributions that a diversity College community can make;
- building in relevant legislative requirements and best practice to all our service delivery and employee policies and procedures, and supporting these with appropriate training and guidance.

Additionally, in 2024, the College signed up to the Association of Colleges EDI Charter and have outlined in a statement on the College's website the ways in which we strive to meet the commitments of that Charter. The signed Charter, our College commitments to meeting that Charter and coverage of this news can be found [here](#).

Every person working for the College has a personal responsibility for implementing and promoting these principles in their day-to-day interactions with others.

To this end, the College acknowledges the following basic rights for all staff, students and members of their community:

- to be treated with dignity and respect;
- to be treated fairly at work, in learning or when otherwise using our services;
- to receive encouragement to reach their full potential.

Other Staff Policies

The People and Culture department has responsibility for creating and updating a set of key policies to support the College's approach to equity, diversity and inclusion.

Dignity at Work Policy (Bullying & Harassment)

This policy covers bullying and harassment of and by managers, employees, contractors, agency staff and anyone else engaged to work at the College, whether they are in a direct contractual relationship with the College or otherwise.

The policy covers bullying and harassment in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, e.g., business trips and work-related social events.

Flexible Working Policy

The College supports the adoption of new ways of working and aims to develop and enable a culture where a healthy work-life balance is the norm.

Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

Colchester Institute seeks to attract the best staff to deliver first-class education and professional and technical development. Regular updates ensure the relevancy of the policy key aims which are:

- Recruiting the best candidates across all job roles;
- Recruiting for current and future needs;
- Embedding safer recruitment into the process so that students and staff are protected;
- Ensuring a fair and legal approach so that discrimination or bias do not affect decision making;
- Maximising efficiency through simple, effective processes;
- All applicants receiving a positive experience to build the reputation of the College.

Leave Policies

The College has a range of leave policies which support diversity and inclusion. These are summarised in the Special Leave Summary document and include provision for Religious Festivals, Assisted Conception and Fertility Treatment, Parental (and Adoption) Leave and Emergency Leave for time off to care for dependents.

Learner Policies

The College has a number of student-focussed policies which assist in the achievement of the College's EDI objectives. These include:

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

This policy states the College's key commitment to ensuring the highest standard of support to learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and outlines the range of mechanisms through which this is achieved.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour Policy and Peer on Peer Sexual Abuse (Learners)

This policy supports the College's Safeguarding policy and our adherence to the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education. It describes harmful sexual behaviours and the steps that must be taken to prevent and appropriately respond to incidents.

Dealing with Bullying and Harassment and Sexual Harassment at College – policy and procedure for FE students.

The College's commitment to the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, creed or religious belief, ethnic or national origins, age and disability or any other irrelevant characteristic. The College recognises the problems associated with bullying and harassment and is committed to providing an environment in which all learners can study without the fear of victimisation. This policy outlines the ways in which the College responds to concern and reports and the actions it takes to keep learners safe.

Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Protocols

This comprehensive policy and the guidance (protocols) that accompany it are key tools in meeting the College's obligation to actively support and promote the positive welfare of all learners and apprentices, including children, adults at risk and those with SEND. It outlines the responsibilities of all members of staff, governors and others in making this happen.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In Spring and Summer 2024, the College engaged in comprehensive and organisational-wide CPD to support our journey to becoming an inclusive College.

Kathryn James EDI specialist from the Education and Training Foundation, and co-author of the Deeper Thinking and Stronger Actionⁱ toolkit facilitated comprehensive training sessions for over 100 line managers, who in turn rolled out training for their teams, supported by the Learning and Development Manager.

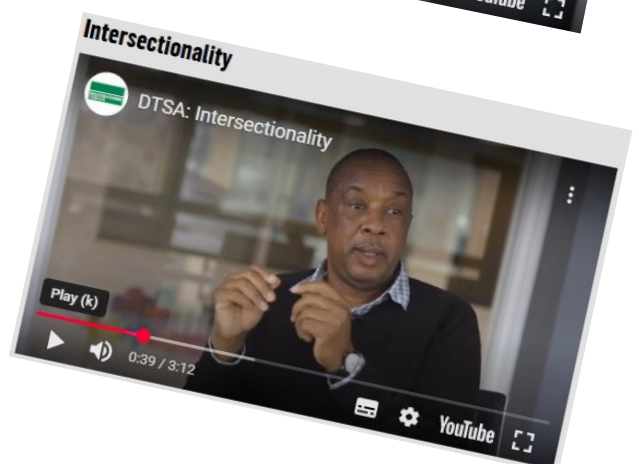
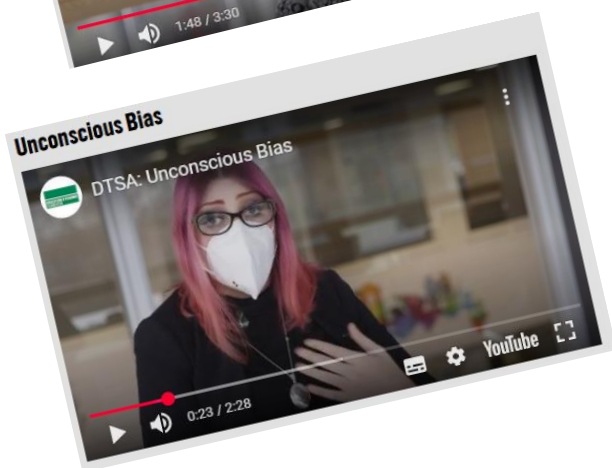
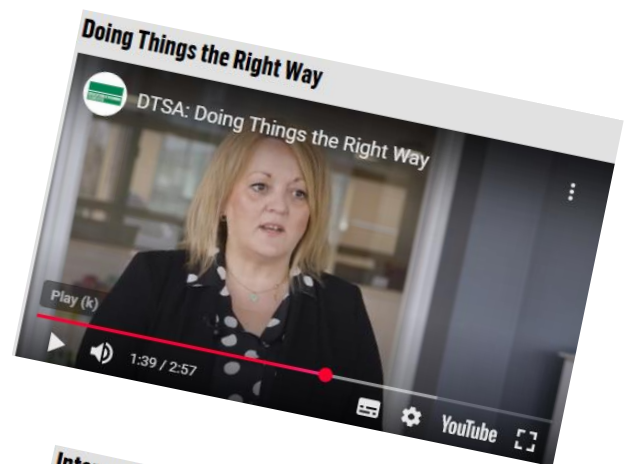
The topics covered through the training for all staff included:

- Language and Concepts
- Reality; Equality; Equity and Justice
- Ordinary privilege
- Unconscious bias and tackling bias

And for managers, additionally:

- Six signature traits of inclusive leadership and applying this in your role.

Through our work with Kathryn James, the Principal and five other members of the College's EDI Steering Group participated in a series of films (featuring staff from three other colleges) about aspects of the Deeper Thinking and Stronger Action toolkit, which can be found on this [link](#).



THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE 2023/2024

Throughout the Academic Year, students are involved in activities which promote and celebrate diversity, achievement or opportunity which are organised through the Personal Development Coordinator as well as through curriculum areas.

Throughout the year, there is a schedule of events to promote festivals and key dates which will have relevance to students, in 2023/2024 these included displays, workshops and events to mark the following events:

Black History Month

In October, both campuses welcomed a motivational speaker, Kheron Gilpin who delivered an inspiring talk on Ubuntu, the philosophy of shared humanity and interconnectedness. "I am because we are".



Diwali – Festival of Light

In November, a display was created to celebrate Diwali, the Festival of Lights. The display featured an interactive QR code, allowing learners to explore a video that explained the significance and traditions of Diwali.



To support good sexual health for all we continue to engage with local community groups including the Outhouse and Essex Sexual Health Services to provide opportunities for students to learn keeping themselves safe. Essex Sexual Health has offered group sessions and had a presence in the main reception areas.



The personal development programme also enables students to engage in a range of EDI-related activities. For example, they may explore key concepts of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), recognise the impact of stereotypes, and understand the importance of inclusivity. We also support learners to promote a safe and respectful environment at Colchester Institute by encouraging inclusive language and fostering respectful communication among peers.

Supporting Learners with Special Education Needs and Disabilities 2023/2024

Colchester Institute is committed to providing the highest standard of support for its students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) ensuring that every student has the support to achieve and excel. We recognise and embrace that the needs of students with SEND is the responsibility of the whole college; all teachers are teachers of SEND.

Support is firstly provided through excellent teaching, including making reasonable adjustments with adaptive teaching, strategies based on individual needs and a general, supportive person-centred approach. Teaching staff and the Additional Learning Support team work in collaboration along with other key areas including exams and the safeguarding and welfare team, to provide wrap around support for students who have SEND needs.

Each course area at the college has a SEND Ambassador who relays new strategies, specific SEND information and training back to their colleagues. All staff at the college had the opportunity at the end of the academic year to experience different learning needs in a practical manner, such as being inside the 'ADHD brain'. Strategies were also given to how best support these needs, not only for SEN learners but as an awareness for all.

In 2023/24 Colchester Institute had 294 learners with Education, Health and Care Plans and 116 learners with High Needs Funding, this number is set to increase next academic year.

Approximately 60% of learners that are sitting GCSE resits have some form of exam access arrangement. The college's referral hub for tutors to share a learner's normal way of working as evidence for their exam access arrangement was improved and has increased efficiency of providing the support in a timelier manner.

Colchester Institute structures support for students into the following steps:

Step 1: Excellent Teaching is in place for all students and can include:

- Reasonable adjustments tailored to individual needs – adaptive teaching, adjusted materials, breaking work into smaller tasks, visual handouts, coloured paper/overlays etc.
- Medical and access arrangements
- Risk Assessments
- Exam Access Arrangements
- Access to IT resources to aid study skills
- One to one tutorial with Course Leader/Course Tutor
- One to one tutorial with Progress and Destination Tutor

Step 2: Focussed SEN Support, can include:

- In-class shared Learning Support Practitioners
- Support sessions with specialist teachers (one to one)
- Read, write software and other assistive technologies
- Consultation support from local authority, including Inclusion Partners and Educational Psychologists
- Transition support for students from school to college and within college areas
- Annual review reports against SEN outcomes
- Teacher of the Deaf and SALT specialist visits, where needed

Step 3: High Needs Support, can include:

- In/out of class support at ratio required
- Specialist assistive technology
- Lunchtime and break supervision
- Breakfast clubs
- Personal care
- Hoist and changing facilities
- Mobility support
- Personalised medical interventions
- Communication Support Workers (Notetakers and Signers)
- Specific tutor reviews against high need outcomes

Further information can be found in our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy – Colchester Institute SEND Policy for FE Students.



FE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT 2023/24

EDI Data Analysis Headlines

Retention and achievement data has been reviewed by the following:

- Age and Ethnicity
- Age and Sex
- Age and Disability

In each case by:

- 16 – 19 study programmes
- 19+ Classroom based
- Apprenticeships: 16- 18, 19 – 23 and 24+

	Difference greater than 5 percentage points
	Difference between 1 and 5 percentage points
	Difference less than 2 percentage points

Age and Ethnicity

		Retention %		Achievement %	
Provision type	Leavers	White	Non-white	White	Non-white
Overall Achievement FE	10213	90.3	91.4	85.2	81.0
16 – 19 study programme	6776	90.4	91.8	85.3	83.6
19+ classroom based	3437	90.2	91.2	85.1	79.4
Overall Achievement Apprenticeships	621	65.1	69.0	63.8	69.0
16 – 18	264	58.1	50.0	55.8	50.0
19 - 23	195	72.3	81.8	72.3	81.8
24+	162	67.8	66.7	67.1	66.7

Of 10213 leavers in 2023/24 19.0% identify as non-white. This is in comparison to 16.4% in 2022/23.

Overall achievement of white learners is 85.2% against 81.0% for non-white learners, a difference of +4.2 percentage points. This is a significant difference compared with 2022/23 figures where the difference was 0.1 percentage point in favour of white learners at 82.1% compared to 82.0% for non-white learners.

Retention of white learners is below that of non-white learners by -1.1 percentage points at 90.3% compared to 91.4%. The difference in retention has reduced from 2022/23 where retention of white learners was -2.7 percentage points at 89.9% compared to 92.6%.

The issue this identifies is that whilst most retained white learners achieve, for those learners who identify as non-white the gap between retention and achievement is -10.4 percentage points.

Achievement and retention for white apprentices in 2023/24 was below that for non-white apprentices by -3.9 percentage points for retention and -5.2 percentage points for achievement. This is in comparison to 2022/23 when achievement for white apprentices was marginally above that for non-white apprentices at +0.7 percentage points.

Achievement and retention is inconsistent between age ranges, with white apprentices outperforming non-white apprentices in the 16-18 and 24+ age ranges but underperforming in the 19-23 age range.

Age and Sex

		Retention %		Achievement %	
Provision type	Leavers	Male	Female	Male	Female
Overall Achievement FE	10213	91.9	89.0	84.9	83.9
16 – 19 study programme	6776	92.1	88.1	86.2	83.4
19+ classroom based	3437	91.1	90.2	80.9	84.5
Overall Achievement Apprenticeships	621	63.1	70.5	61.7	69.4
16 – 18	264	55.4	66.7	52.9	65.0
19 - 23	195	73.1	73.8	72.3	73.8
24+	162	66.0	70.6	66.0	69.1

Of 10213 non-apprenticeship provision leavers in 2023/24, 47.5% are reported as female and 52.5% as male. This is in comparison to 44.3% female and 55.7% male in 2022/23.

Overall achievement of female learners is 83.9% compared to 84.9% for male learners, a difference of -1.0 percentage points. This is a marginal difference compared with 2022/23 where the difference was 0.5 percentage points in favour of male learners at 82.3% compared to 81.8%.

Retention of male learners is above that of female learners by +2.9 percentage points at 91.9% compared to 89.0%. The difference in retention has increased by +2.3 percentage points from 2022/23 where retention of male learners was +0.6 percentage points at 90.6% compared to 90.0% for female learners.

Overall, the achievement for male apprentices is 61.7% compared to 69.4% for female apprentices, a difference of -7.7 percentage points. The largest achievement gap can be seen in the 16 – 18 age range with female apprentices outperforming male apprentices by 12.1 percentage points at 65% compared to 52.9%. For 19 – 23-year-olds the gap is 1.5 percentage points and for 19+ it is 3.1 percentage points, both in favour of female apprentices.

Retention overall for male apprentices is 63.1% compared to 70.5% for female apprentices, a difference of -7.4 percentage points. The largest gap in retention can be seen in the 16 – 18 age range with female apprentice retention of 66.7% in comparison to 55.4%, a difference of -11.3 percentage points. For apprentices aged 19 – 23 the retention gap is -0.7 percentage points and for 24+ it is -4.6 percentage points, both in favour of female apprentices.

In comparison, in 2022/23 overall male apprentice retention and achievement rates were higher than for female apprentices. Male apprentice achievement was 60.3% compared with 57.9% for female apprentices and retention was at 64.1% compared with 58.3%, again in favour of male apprentices. In 2022/23 the largest gap in both retention and achievement was in the 24+ age range with male achievement +9.9 percentage points and retention +11.3 percentage points.

There remains a significant inconsistency in retention and achievement between male and female apprentices and across different age ranges.

Age and Disability

		Retention %			Achievement %		
Provision type	Leavers	Has DLDD*	No DLDD	Not provided	Has DLDD	No DLDD	Not provided
Overall Achievement FE	10213	88.2	91.5	90.4	81.5	85.4	85.2
16 – 19 study programme	6776	88.6	91.9	88.0	82.6	86.8	82.3
19+ classroom based	3437	87.3	90.7	96.2	78.9	83.1	92.0
Overall Achievement Apprenticeships	621	49.1	68.9	N/A	48.1	67.4	N/A
16 – 18	264	43.8	61.6	N/A	41.7	58.8	N/A
19 - 23	195	53.7	79.2	N/A	53.7	77.9	N/A
24+	162	52.9	69.6	N/A	52.9	69.0	N/A

*DLDD – Declared learning difficulty/disability

For the purpose of this analysis/report the comparisons will be made between learners who had declared a learning difficult/disability and those who have no declared learning difficulty/disability and will exclude those 'not provided' within non-apprenticeship provision.

Of 10213 leavers in 2023/24 25.2% identify having a declared learning difficulty/disability (26.2% in 2022/23), 63.0% had no declared learning difficulty/disability (73.8% in 2022/23) and 11.8% did not provide information (0.03% in 2022/23). It is unclear why more learners did not provide the information in 2023/24 compared with 2022/23 when only 3 were recorded as 'not provided'.

Overall achievement for learners who have identified as having a declared learning difficulty/disability is -3.9 percentage points lower at 81.5% compared to 85.4% for those who have identified as having no declared learning difficulty/disability. The difference in 2022/23 was -3 percentage points for learners with a declared learning difficulty/disability at 79.9% compared to 82.9% for those without a declared learning difficulty/disability.

Overall retention for learners with a declared learning difficulty/disability is -3.3 percentage points lower at 88.2% compared to 91.5% for those who have no declared learning difficulty/disability. In comparison in 2022/23 the difference was -2.4 percentage points for learners with a declared learning difficulty/disability.

Whilst it is difficult to accurately assess the retention and achievement of learners with a declared learning difficulty/disability due to 11.8% 'not provided' learners with a declared disability/difficulty under-perform compared to their peers who do not.

The number of apprentices that are recorded as having a declared learning difficulty/disability was 17% in 2023/24 compared to 16.1% in 2022/23.

Overall, apprentices who have a declared learning difficulty/disability underperform significantly compared to those with no declared learning difficulty/disability in terms of retention at -19.8 percentage points and -19.3 percentage points for achievement.

The underperformance is across all age ranges with the most noticeable difference in apprentices aged 19 – 23 where achievement for apprentices with a declared learning difficulty/disability is -24.2 percentage points below that of apprentices with no declared learning difficulty/disability. Retention is -25.5 percentage points below.

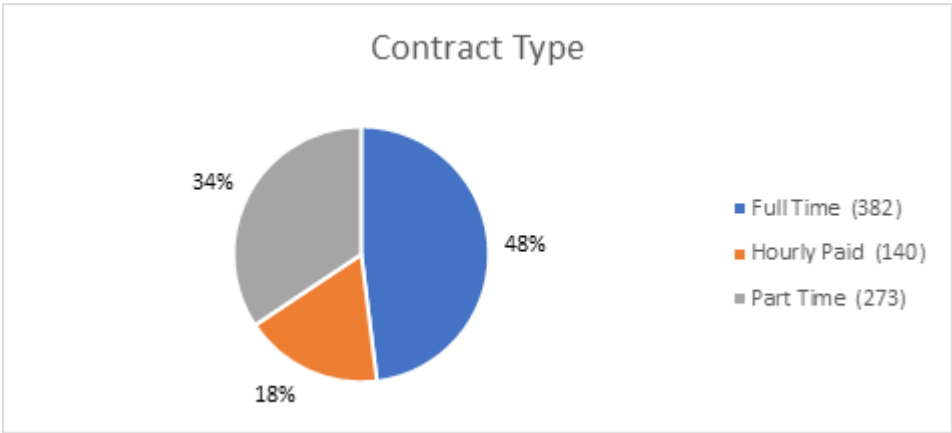
The achievement gap in 2022/23 was -8.7 percentage points lower for apprentices with a declared learning difficulty/disability at 52.1% compared to 60.8% for those with no declared learning difficulty/disability.

ACTIONS AS A RESULT OF THE ABOVE

Data has been shared with the wider college leadership and management group and is being discussed in Area Monitoring Meetings (AMM), Apprenticeship Performance Monitoring Meetings (APMM) and relevant 1:1 management meetings. Where areas of concern are identified there are actions to address these within Quality Improvement Plans (QIP), both at college and departmental level, and set as management objectives.

STAFFING PROFILE 2023/2024

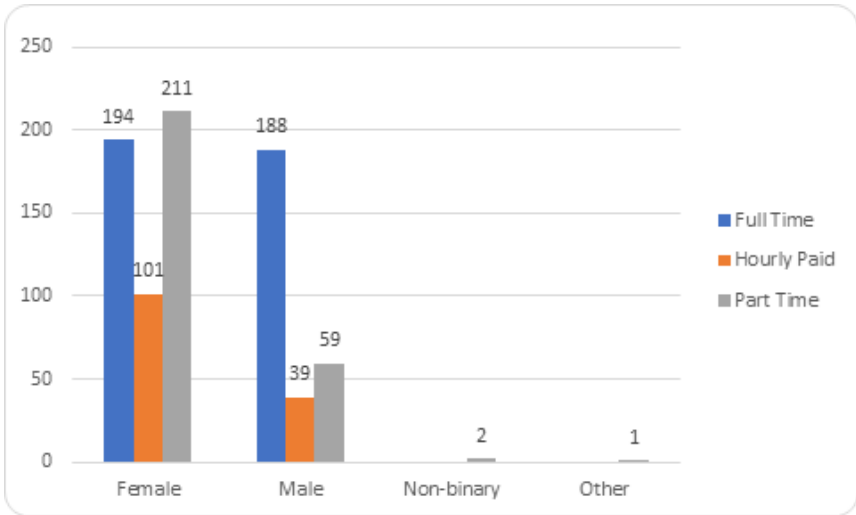
Staff by Contract Type and Contract Type by Gender



82% of staff were on core contracts and of those 58% were full-time and 42% were fractional. 18% of all staff were on hourly paid (zero hours) contracts. Many staff welcome the flexibility of an hourly paid contract as it assists them in balancing work with other commitments.

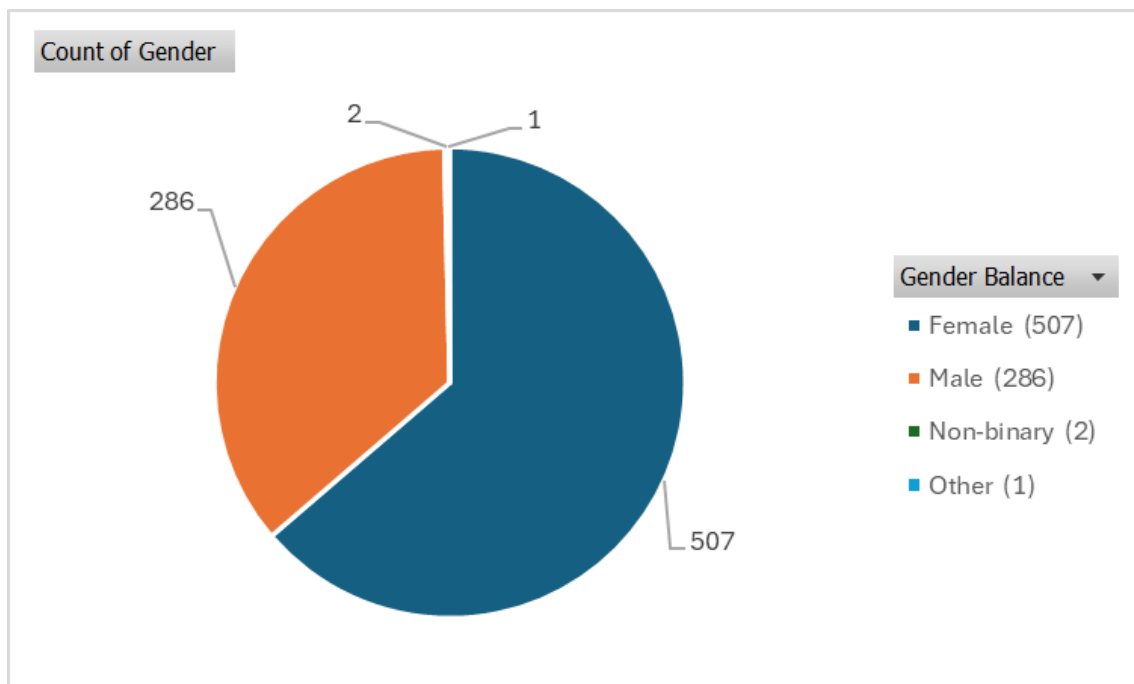
For the college, in many areas, such contracts provide a way of providing services which can have an uneven demand throughout the year, such as exam invigilation with peaks of activity through the year and learning support which is driven by fluctuating student need. Hourly paid contracts for teachers might be used where niche or specialist subjects are taught, which may appear in a single unit or module, and are not delivered all year round.

The chart below shows that hourly paid contracts are more commonly held by females as are part time core contracts. This reflects a considerably higher volume of female applicants for part time (core and hourly paid roles) but there are also a larger number of females who request a contract reduction during their time at the College, often following a period of maternity, adoption or other leave.



Gender Balance

The workforce had 507 females, 286 males, 1 other and 2 people who chose to be identified as non-binary in the data collection. Females make up nearly 64% of the Colchester Institute workforce. This gender balance is in line with the national picture, with the most recent DfE data (released in late May 2024) showing that in 2022/23, females made up 65.2% of the FE workforce.ⁱⁱ

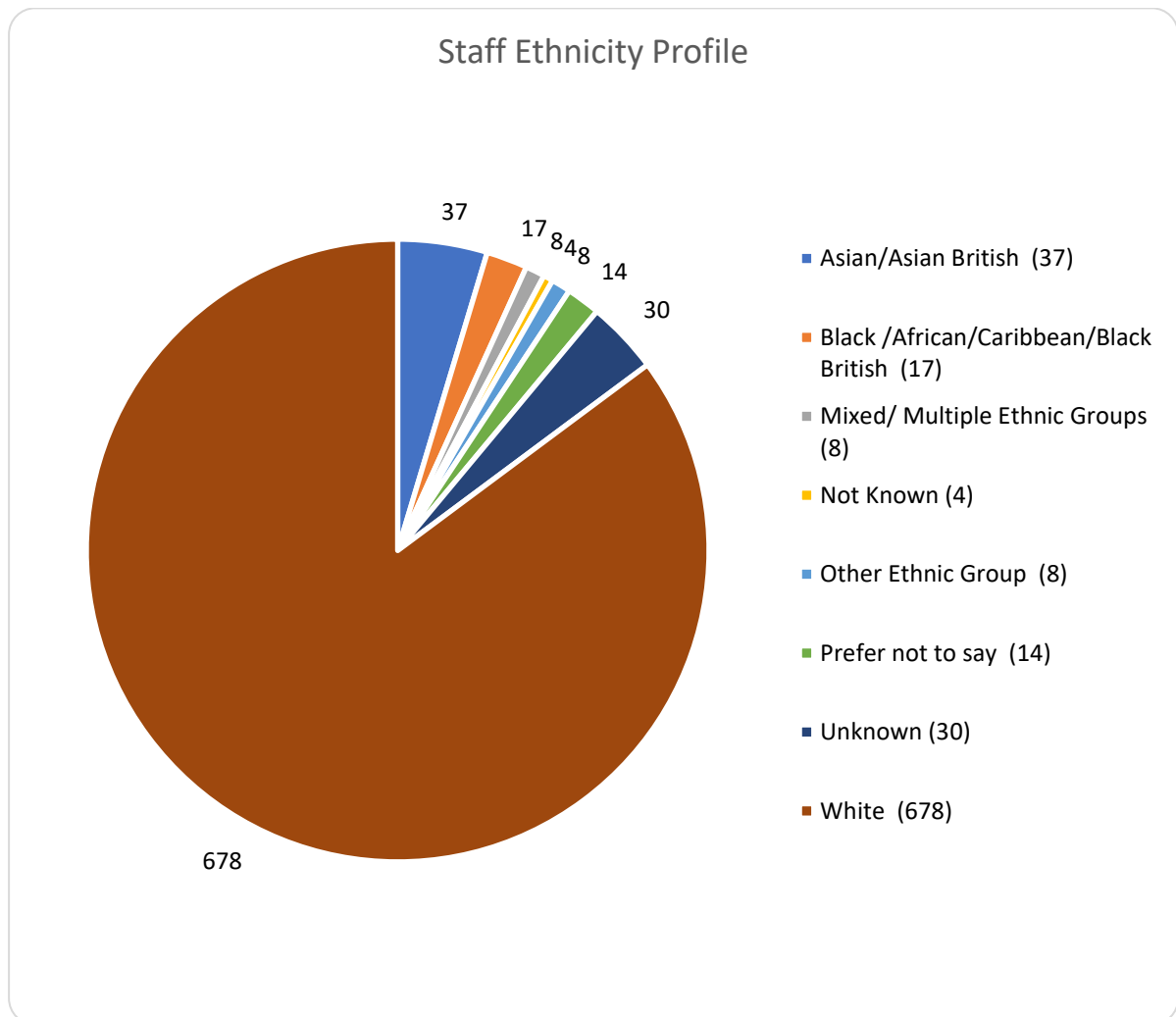


¹ Further education workforce, Academic year 2022/23 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK

Ethnicity Profile of Staff

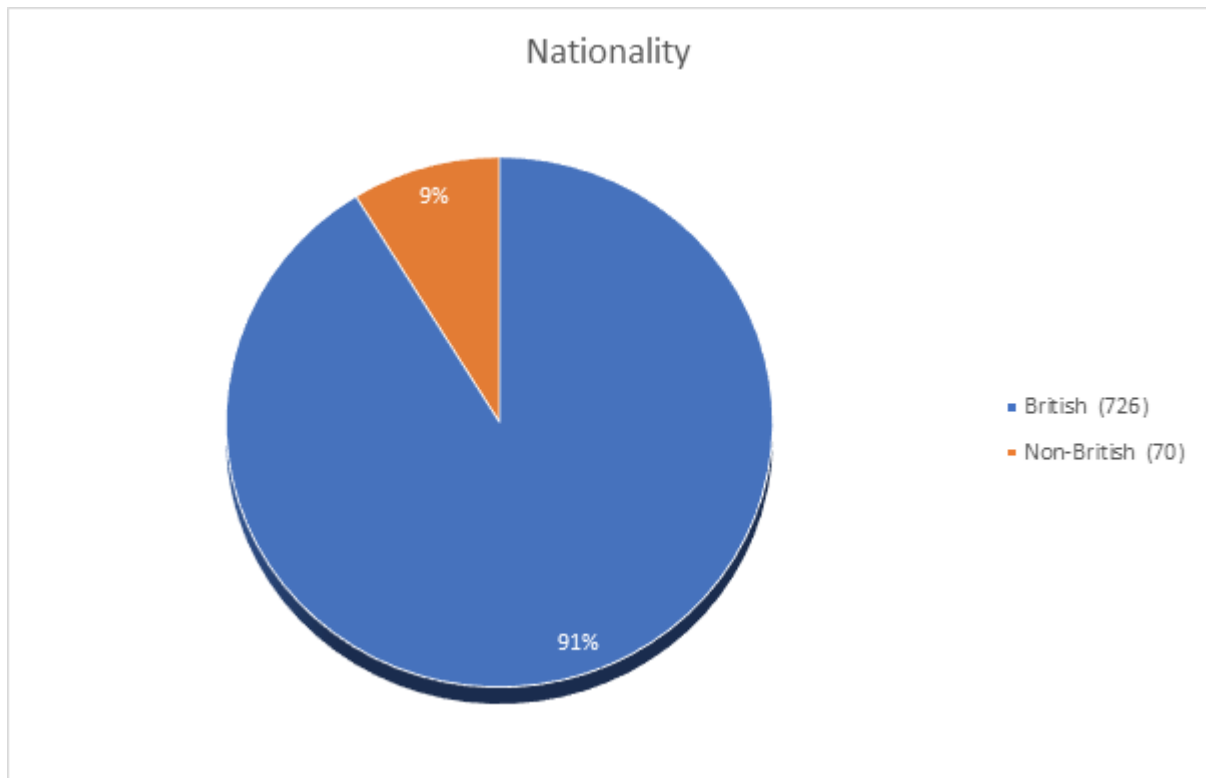
Within the College's current Strategic Plan, there is an aim to ensure that the workforce is truly representative of the communities it serves. The chart below shows the ethnic profile of staff. The chart below shows that 85% of the College's staff identified their ethnic group as White. This is a 6 percentage point reduction on last year, when 91% of the workforce were White. There is a 2 point increase in the number of Asian and Asian/British employees, an increase from 23 to 37 since last year.

Nationally, data shows that 20.6% of the FE workforce identify as belonging to an ethnic minority group. However, of more relevance in this respect, is a comparison with the local community. In this respect, the College is representative of the communities it serves with 91% of the population recorded as White across the three districts – Braintree (95%); Tendring (97%) and the more populous Colchester (87%) (ONS data).



Employee Nationality

Data on Nationality is comprehensive. This shows that 91% of employees were British (irrespective of ethnic origin). This represents a 3 percentage point decrease on last year when 94% of staff were British. The remaining 9% included 23 different nationalities, the largest grouping being Irish.



Below is a list of nationalities represented by the 70 non-British staff members.

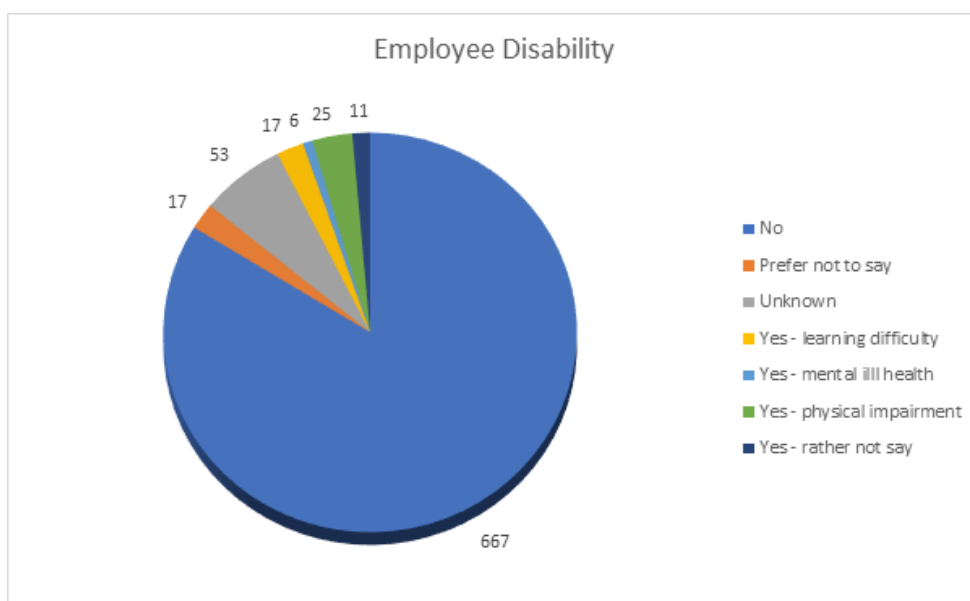
American	Danish	Greek	Lithuanian	Pakistani	Spanish
Australian	Dutch	Hungarian	Malaysian	Polish	Syrian
British (Overseas)	French	Indian	Nepalese	Portuguese	Zimbabwean
Chinese	German	Irish	New Zealander	Romanian	
Czech	Ghana	Italian	Nigerian	South African	

Disability - current Employees

The current workforce data on disability includes 53 unknown and a further 17 preferring not to say. Of the staff who have provided a response, almost 10% reported a disability. This represents more than a 3 percentage point increase on the previous year when fewer than 6% of staff had declared a disability.

The volume of unknowns has fallen considerably (from 84 last year to 53).

These data is positive suggesting a likely combination of both a more diverse workforce in respect of disability and a greater willingness among colleagues to declare disabilities within a supportive culture.



Colchester Institute remains a 'Disability Confident' Committed Employer.

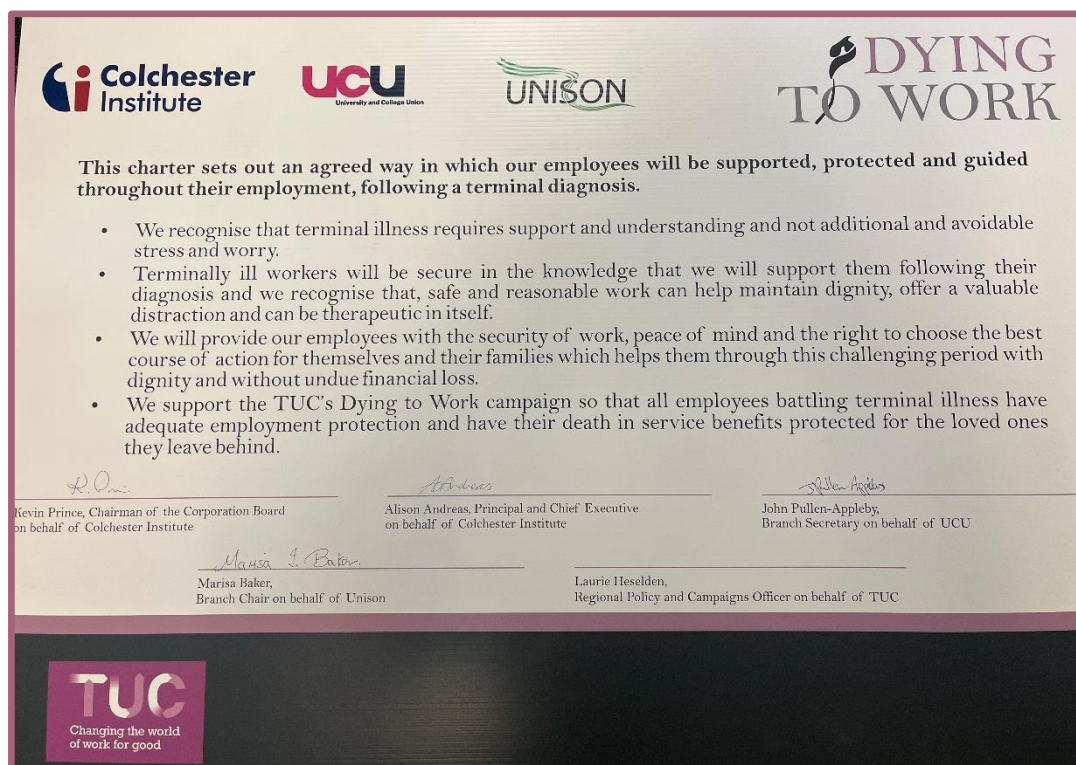
This means that College commits to:

- ensuring our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible including when communicating and promoting vacancies,
- offering an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job,
- anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as required at both application stage and when in employment,
- supporting any existing employee who acquires a disability or long-term health condition,
- carrying out at least one activity that will make a difference for disabled people.



Dying to Work Charter

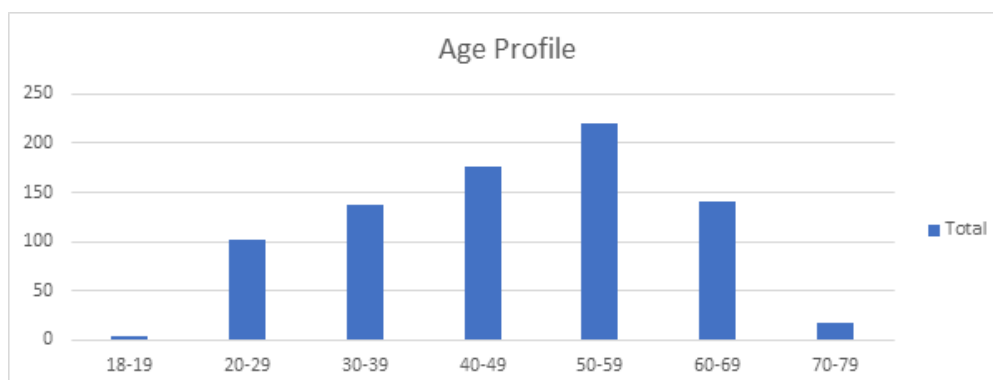
The College signed the Dying to Work Charter in 2019 and continues to commit to fully supporting staff who are given a diagnosis of a terminal illness.



Age Profile

The workforce spans the age range of 18 to 79. The chart below shows the spread of ages. The mean age is 48 – one year younger than last year's mean of 49.

The most populous group is 50 – 59, making up 28% of the workforce. 17 employees are aged over 70 and just 4 are under 20. 243 staff (30%) are under 40 representing an increase of 39 staff (25%) in this age group last year.



The higher percentage of older workers than would be seen in, for example, schools, reflects a particular characteristic of the teaching staff in General Further Education. In almost all cases, those teaching and assessing in vocational areas have previously worked in the industry they are training students to join, so are effectively in a second (or subsequent) career. This industrial experience and expertise is an important aspect of teaching and assessing on professional and technical programmes but does impact longevity in roles and staff turnover as staff approach retirement.

Whilst experience and expertise developed in a particular sector is of great value, for many vocational teaching staff, a workforce with a more even representation of age groups can also have advantages, in an environment where young people are a key stakeholder. To this end, it is good to see a 25% increase in the number of employees aged under 30.

COMMITMENT TO IMPROVEMENT AND ACTION PLANNING

In signing up to the AoC EDI Charter in Autumn 2024, the College undertook to publish its own commitments to meeting the terms of the Charter.

Below are the commitments which were drafted and approved by governors, based largely on a survey of all staff carried out in January 2025.

Colchester Institute and the AoC Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Charter

Colchester Institute is proud to have signed up to the Association of Colleges Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Charter, a national initiative for Further Education (FE) in England.

Governors committed to the Charter and to the statement below at the Board meeting on Friday 28 March 2025, further strengthening our public commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and reflecting our [core values](#).

The full AoC Charter, signed by Alison Andreas, Principal and Chief Executive and Lisa Blake, Chair of Governors can be read [here](#).



What does signing the charter mean for the Colchester Institute community?

In order to embrace the spirit and the letter of the Charter, Colchester Institute has evaluated current performance and practice and has taken feedback, including a comprehensive staff survey. From that activity, four overarching priorities were identified, with commitment statements for each. These can be read below:

1. Culture and language

- **Through varied and comprehensive Professional Development for staff and Personal Development for students, we will strive to ensure an Inclusive and Respectful environment.**

Success Factor

The language and actions of campus users create a welcoming environment for all, where people can be themselves, try out ideas and thrive.

2. Policies, procedures and process

- **We will ensure that policies, procedures and processes do not disadvantage individuals or groups.**

Success Factor

All writers, reviewers and approvers of policies, procedures and processes have received training, and all new and revised policies are actively critiqued for this purpose.

- **We will create a more comprehensive database of diversity data from employment applicants, new recruits, and existing staff in order to monitor the equitability and inclusivity of our policies, procedures and practices.**

Success Factor

Evaluation shows that our recruitment and employment practices do not disadvantage individuals or groups.

- **We will ensure that all promotional and publicly available materials (graphically and pictorially) reflect our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.**

Success Factor

Staff, students and applicants can identify with those portrayed in materials, and language and text used is non-discriminatory and accessible to all.

3. Curriculum delivery and support

- **We will establish a quality assurance process to review course content, materials and delivery in order to ensure accessibility; and to develop learners' understanding and appreciation of diversity.**

Success Factors

Evaluation and observation show that all curricula are accessible and inclusive.

The curriculum equips learners to be responsible, respectful citizens and promotes respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law.

- **Learner achievement gaps are identified, addressed and removed at both College and Subject levels. A College wide priority here is the achievement of learners with declared learning disabilities.**

Success Factor

Quality Improvement Plans (College and Area) include actions to address achievement gaps and these actions are impactful with specific targets are met.

4. Campus accessibility and experience

- **We will review physical accessibility for all campus buildings and locations and identify solutions to ensure that all campus users can access all services and move about our environment with ease.**

Success Factor

The whole Colchester Institute community enjoys the same high quality campus experience.

- **We will work to ensure the availability of assistive technologies to ensure equity of access to learning and work for all students and staff.**

Success Factor

All students and staff can access their learning and work equitably.

In support of the above, we will:

- Create a detailed action plan to ensure the delivery of the above (end April 2025).
- Monitor progress against this plan at all levels including Board level (from April 2025).
- Involve staff and students in the delivery and monitoring of these plans, including through the EDI Steering Group (from April 2025).
- Publish our progress in the College's Annual EDI report (annually from May 2025).
- Celebrate and showcase diversity and inclusion achievements in the College (from April 2025).

Colchester Institute Values

We are an **INCLUSIVE** College, welcoming employees and learners of all backgrounds, ages and abilities.

We are **COLLABORATIVE**, working in partnership internally and externally to achieve shared goals.

We are **RESPECTFUL** of each other in our words, actions and behaviours.

We are **AMBITIOUS** for our learners, our staff and our College, always striving for excellence.

We are **HONEST** and open, and act with integrity in all that we do.

We provide a physically and emotionally **SAFE** environment, where people can be themselves, try out ideas and thrive.

The College's EDI Steering Group, which meets on a six-weekly basis, is compiling an Action Plan for the period April 2025 to July 2026, which will document the activities and events that will assist the College in meeting these commitments.