

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

2023-2025



# Strategic Vision



Blackpool and The Fylde College is committed in the advancement of equality, diversity and inclusion. We celebrate the diversity of all our students, apprentices, colleagues and any visitors accessing our services and have embraced the principles of Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement. (FREDIE)

Blackpool and The Fylde College believes that everyone should expect to be treated with respect and dignity and we are committed to provide a safe and supportive environment in which everyone is able to study and work to the best of their abilities.

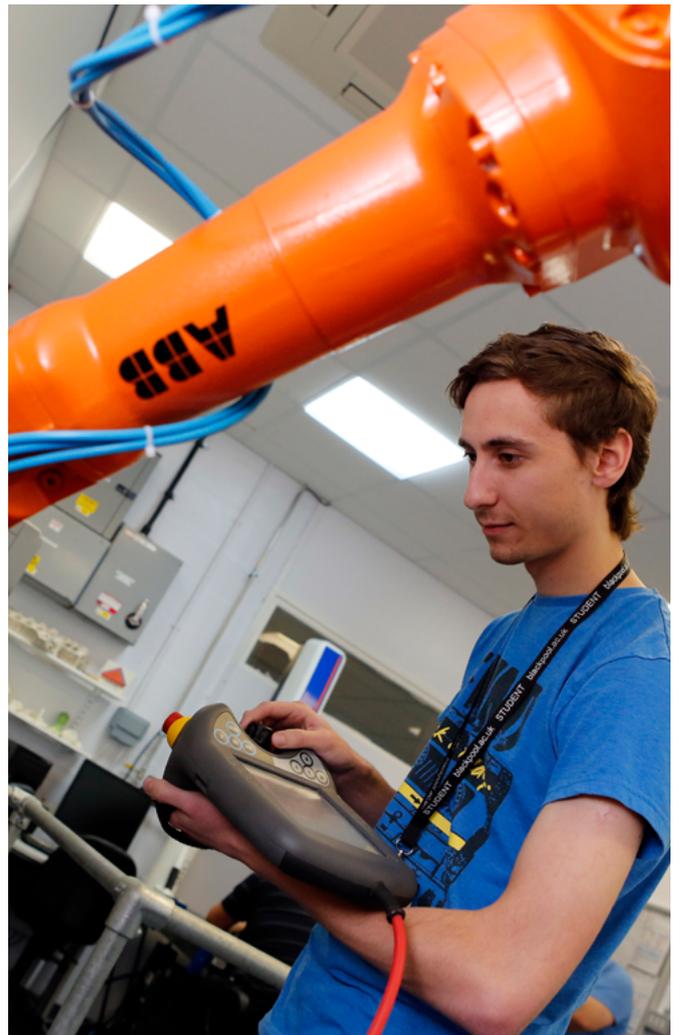
The College recognises and proactively works towards its responsibilities in respect of Equality Legislation and our duty to:

- **Eliminate discrimination and harassment**
- **Advance equality of opportunity**
- **Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who don't.**

# Intent

There is a clear ethical, moral, social case for why equality, diversity and inclusion matter and why the associated themes should be at the forefront of our strategic planning.

Knowing the communities that we serve and responding to their diverse needs are at the very heart of our educational offer.



# Key Principles

The College's Equality Objectives<sup>1</sup> help to ensure that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are placed at the heart of College policies and procedures and are considered as part of the decision-making process. Equality objectives are not stand-alone but are interwoven in all aspects of our work, which is underpinned by the 5-year People Strategy

The objectives cover all of the protected characteristics, these are legally protected by the Equality Act 2010

- **Age**
- **Race**
- **Disability**
- **Religion or belief**
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Gender reassignment**
- **Marriage & civil partnership**
- **Sex**
- **Pregnancy and Maternity**

and those additional characteristics pertinent to Blackpool and The Fylde College which extends to include, where appropriate, social status, deprivation and adverse childhood experiences, homelessness, unemployment, asylum and refugee status or any identifiable cause protected by law.

By meeting these objectives and the actions associated with each, we strive to ensure that we remove any barriers that students, apprentices, colleagues or stakeholders may face while being proactive in promoting good practice.

We aim to create an inclusive learning and working environment that respects and celebrates differences and individuality. We want everyone to feel able to fully participate in College life and achieve their full potential.

Our key themes for our equality objectives are to promote and champion social mobility, accessibility, voice and influence, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing while challenging discrimination. These themes align with our core values.

## **Our B&FC values:**

- **Placing the student at the heart of all we do**
- **Showing fairness, courtesy and mutual respect**
- **Learning, teaching and assessment as the key to our success**
- **Empowering everyone to achieve their full potential**
- **Working collaboratively to achieve excellence and growth across all the communities that we serve.**

<sup>1</sup>Equality Act 2010

# Definitions

## Equality

Equality is ensuring that every individual has the same opportunities to make the most of their lives and talents. No one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability.

*'Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their talents and the most of their life. It is also the belief that no one should have fewer opportunities because of where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. Equality recognises that historically certain groups of people with protected characteristics such as race, disability, sex, and sexual orientation have experienced discrimination and that this discrimination should be challenged in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.'*

(Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2021)  
(Equality Act, 2010)

## Diversity

Diversity is to recognise that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non-visible ways, and that those differences are to be recognised, respected and valued.

*'Diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It is about empowering people by respecting and appreciating what makes them different, in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, education, and national origin. It extends to political, social class, linguistic and other categories of identity which might be sources of social inequality. These differences lend themselves to the generation of critical perspectives and points of view, and a diverse group of people will have a wide range of skills and experience. Beyond accepting and tolerating difference, diversity means celebrating the added value that these differences bring.'*

(Global Diversity Practice, 2021)

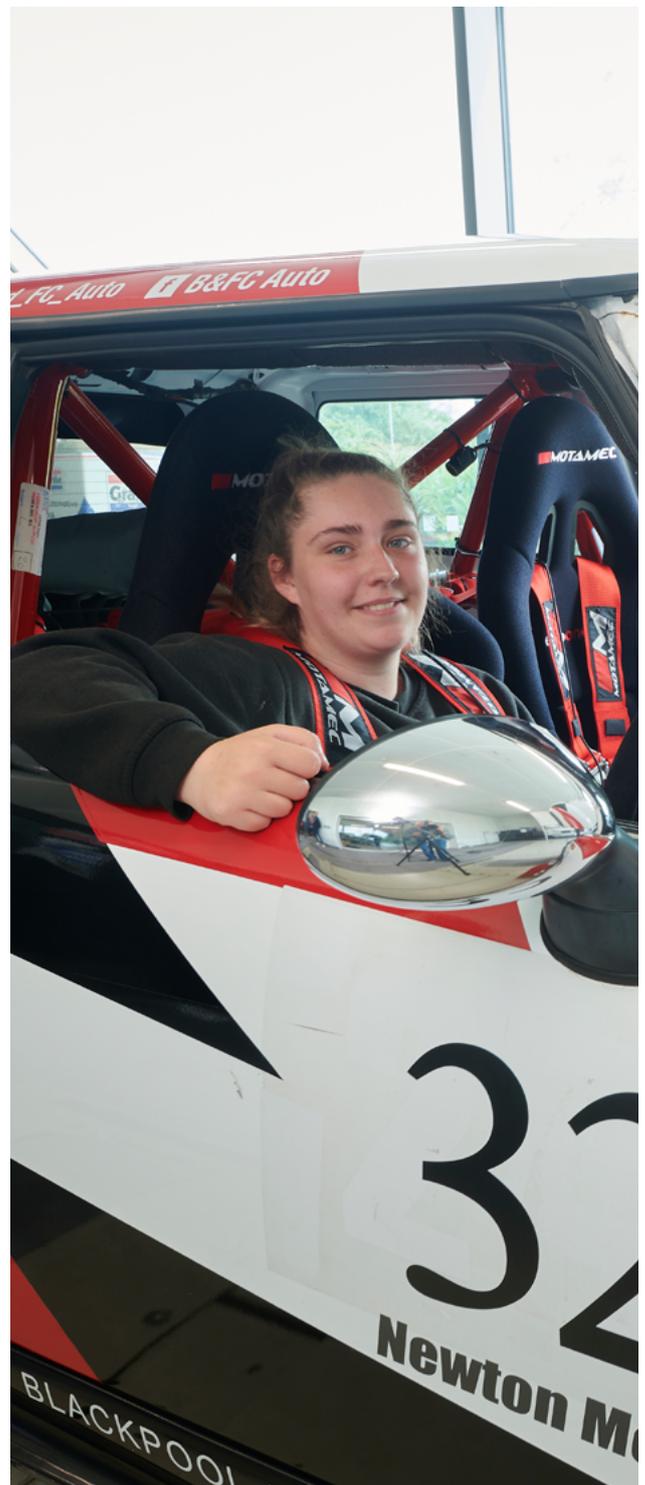
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### Inclusion

Inclusion involves fostering an environment that enables people to be themselves. Regardless of their backgrounds, characteristics and ways of thinking, to work effectively and fulfil their full potential. Our whole College community must feel valued, listened to and respected. We want all of our students and apprentices to develop a range of wide personal and social skills as they get ready for the working world and other opportunities in the future.

***'Inclusive practice ensures that exploration of diversity and differences is conducted in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment free of discrimination. It means understanding one another by surpassing simple tolerance to ensure people truly value their differences. This allows us both to embrace and to celebrate the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual and place positive value on diversity in the community and in the workforce. Everyone in an organisation brings with them a diverse set of perspectives, work, and life experiences, as well as religious and cultural differences. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels valued, that their contribution matters, and they can perform to their full potential. The power of diversity can only be unleashed, and its benefits reaped when we recognise these differences and learn to respect and value each individual irrelevant of their background'***

(Global Diversity Practice, 2021).



# Strategic Equality Objectives

*To further improve the celebration of diversity and equality of opportunity for all, removing barriers to learning and work wherever reasonably practicable.*

B&FC values	Equality objective
Placing the student at the heart of all we do	Ensure all have access to opportunities to have a voice and the ability to influence
Showing fairness, courtesy and mutual respect	Promote and champion diversity and challenge discrimination
Learning, teaching and assessment as the key to our success	Ensure accessibility for all
Empowering everyone to achieve their full potential	Promote and champion social mobility through wellbeing and accessibility of opportunity
Working collaboratively to achieve excellence and growth across all the communities that we serve	Promote and champion social mobility through wellbeing and accessibility of opportunity



# Student and Apprentice EDI Objectives

## Student and Apprentice Equality Objective 1:

**Ensure all students and apprentices have access to opportunities to have a voice and the ability to influence - aligned with our College Value: Placing the student at the heart of all we do**

We commit to:

- a. Work with the wider student body to increase engagement, influence and co-production in our equality, diversity and inclusion action plan, to ensure students and apprentices are widely consulted and create their own opportunities to shape and promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the College through granular intelligence collected throughout the academic year to represent the full learner journey.
- b. Develop the knowledge, confidence and awareness of students' and apprentices' representation via the Student Union to ensure they have a strong EDI voice in their study, work and social environments.
- c. Continue to coordinate activities for students and apprentices to plan, co-produce and lead activities which challenge non-inclusive behaviours.
- d. Continue to create opportunities for students and apprentices to engage with local communities and networks, to share best practice and build links with external groups.



## Student and Apprentice Equality Objective 2:

**Promote and champion diversity and challenge discrimination - aligned with our College Value: Showing fairness, courtesy and mutual respect**

We commit to:

- a. Engage an external audit tool to support Equality Impact Assessment at organisational level.
- b. Review and further improve our strategies to inform and celebrate equality and diversity and British values across all aspects of college life.
- c. Refine the data reporting process within the quality cycle, with a view to increasing outreach and support.
- d. Continue to celebrate the differences between members of the College community with actions, demonstrated in all documents and images, drawing on diversity in its broadest sense.
- e. Achieve recognised diversity status working collaboratively with the Student Union.
- f. Continue to provide opportunities for students and apprentices to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to challenge behaviours which are oppressive, disrespectful or intimidating through restorative approaches and a 'one college' approach, recognising that risk or vulnerability of students may be heightened due to protected characteristics.



**Student and Apprentice  
Equality Objective 3:**

**Accessibility for all – aligned to our  
College Value: Learning, teaching and  
assessment as the key to our success**

We commit to:

- a. Further develop inclusive learning and teacher training, based on quality first teaching and Universal Design for Learning principles. Moving towards ‘every teacher is a SEND teacher’ which will embed in our ILTA processes.
- b. Embrace best practice in relation to government accessibility guidelines in all our published, digital, teaching, learning and assessment materials and environments.
- c. Raise awareness of the impact of hidden disabilities on participation and inclusion in college life.
- d. Improving the way we identify and meet additional support needs for all students and apprentices, through a SEND operating framework and procedures.
- e. Champion accessibility of the curriculum and the College environment, both physical and online, challenging ability discrimination and promoting respect.
- f. Ensure barriers to socio-cultural accessibility are diminished by fully promoting our range of bursaries and hardship funds.
- g. Through our work on the Access and Participation Plan (APP) continue to eliminate gaps in student achievement and progression.



### **Student and Apprentice Equality Objective 4:**

**Promote and champion social mobility through wellbeing and accessibility of opportunity aligned to our College Value: Empowering everyone to achieve their full potential and working collaboratively to achieve excellence and growth across all the communities that we serve**

We commit to:

- a. Reference a trauma informed approach in designing student and apprentice facing policies and procedures.
- b. Continue to create training opportunities for colleagues explicitly, teaching emotional wellbeing, healthy lifestyles, restorative approaches, and strategies to build resilience through the personal development curriculum.
- c. Continue to consistently review College policies and procedures for students and apprentices to ensure they are inclusive in both language and impact and continue to promote the “Think First” approach to the college’s inclusive framework.
- d. Continue to monitor the take-up of development opportunities and evaluate feedback on student experience and outcomes by equality characteristic. To identify and address performance gaps in experience or outcome throughout the learner journey.
- e. Continue to develop our curriculum portfolio to reflect local and regional skills needs matched to the needs of our community.



# B&FC Employee EDI Objectives

## **Employee Equality Objective 1: Ensure all colleagues have access to opportunities to have a voice and the ability to influence**

- a. Continue and develop collaborative, open relationships with the Staff Representation Group (SRG) and recognised trade unions.
- b. Continue to ensure that relevant groups are consulted with when redrafting and introducing policies and procedures.
- c. Continue to deliver employee surveys and PULSE surveys to enhance the employee voice and ensure that appropriate feedback is provided with actions taken and pledges shared and progress measured.
- d. Develop and continue B&FC's focus groups for new colleagues, those with specific characteristics or experiences, apprentices and other groups to ensure colleague's experiences are optimised and feedback sought and acted upon.
- e. Ensuring that leaders develop, drive and role model a culture where every voice matters.

## **Employee Equality Objective 2: Promote and Champion Diversity and Challenge Discrimination across B&FC**

- a. Continue to review external partnerships with groups that promote diversity and work towards appropriate awards and standards such as the Lancashire LGBT Quality Mark and our Disability Confident Leader status.
  - b. Reviewing College policies and procedures to ensure they are inclusive in both language and impact and continuing to promote Think First approaches, the colleges inclusive language guidance and training.
  - c. Providing opportunities for colleagues to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to challenge behaviours which are oppressive, disrespectful, intimidating or bullying through restorative approaches and a 'one college' approach.
  - d. Continued reporting and activities to reduce the Gender Pay Gap.
  - e. Continued to provide a suite of mandatory leadership and management development programmes and a core theme of equality, diversity and inclusion within our professional development offering.
  - f. Continued to provide opportunities for colleagues to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to challenge behaviours which are oppressive, disrespectful, intimidating or bullying.
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### **Employee Equality Objective 3: Accessibility for all**

- a. Continue to create and enhance the supportive environment where colleagues feel empowered to disclose protected characteristics should they wish to do so.
- b. Continue activities under B&FC's Disability Confident Leader accreditation.
- c. Continue to develop and review all policies, procedures and other colleague facing materials to ensure accessibility requirements are considered and embedded.
- d. Continue to support all colleagues with disabilities through reasonable adjustments and other appropriate support.
- e. Continue and enhance a culture where differences are celebrated and everyone is supported to achieve their full potential.
- f. Continue to successfully embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into recruitment, training, promotion, appraisal, onboarding and induction.
- g. Continue to create and drive a culture where wellbeing is valued. Equality, diversity and inclusion are promoted and embedded into everything we do.

### **Employee Equality Objective 4: Promote and champion Social Mobility through Wellbeing**

- a. Continue to create training opportunities for colleagues that explicitly promote emotional wellbeing, healthy lifestyles, restorative approaches and strategies to build resilience.
  - b. Continue to enhance the colleague experience through fostering an environment of access and inclusion and improving the diversity of our organisation allowing everyone to achieve their full potential.
  - c. B&FC leaders will continue to place wellbeing as a strategic objective.
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# Operationalising the strategy

## What we will do next:

### **Implementation of the student/ apprentices Equality Objective commitments:**

The above commitments will be incorporated into an EDI Student and Apprentice Action Plan which will be monitored and actioned through the Learning, Teaching and Equality Committee.

### **Implementation of the employee Equality objectives:**

The above commitments will be incorporated into an employee EDI statement which will be consulted and monitored through our governance processes aligned to B&FC People Strategy.

### **Impact measures for students and apprentices:**

Through our EDI Student and Apprentice Objectives and Action Plan key KPIs will be monitored and measured to track impact, for instance EDIMS will be monitored against all performance frameworks including attendance, retention, continuation, achievement, progression and destinations – however other measures such as participation in learner voice activities, enrichment, societies and take up of support such as financial and partners 4 success provision will be developed to provide the widest possible picture of the full student journey.

### **Impact measures for employees:**

Through employee EDI Objectives key KPIs will be monitored and measured to track impact, for instance, work force demographics will be monitored against all performance frameworks including attendance, recruitment, retention, progression and performance reviews – however other measures such as Gender pay gap analysis, employee voice activities (employee survey) and The Staff Representation Group will be developed to provide the widest possible picture of the employee journey.

# Aligned Strategies, Policies and Procedures:

Whilst all policies ([www.blackpool.ac.uk/college-policies](http://www.blackpool.ac.uk/college-policies)) will naturally align under this strategy, as our process for Equality Impact Assessment is an integral part of design and approval processes for all B&FC policies, there are affinities to:

**Access and Participation Plan**

**Inclusive Learning, Teaching, and Assessment Strategy**

**Student Engagement Strategy**

**Wellbeing Strategy**

**Anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy**

**Safeguarding policy**

**Financial support policy**

**Positive Behaviour Policy**

## **For employees:**

**People Strategy**

**Respect and consideration for others policy**

**Employee EDI statement**

**Employee wellbeing statement**

**Business Etiquette**



## **Appendices**

**Legislation and associated organisations:**

[The Equality Act 2010](#)

British Values (from the Prevent Duty 2014)

[Human Rights Act 1998](#)

[Disability Confident Employer Scheme 2020](#)

[SEND green paper](#)

BAMEOver – a statement for the UK

Lancashire LGBT Quality Mark

[DfE International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance 2016](#)

