



Approved By:	Board of Directors/Trustees
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Policy Holder:	IBTC

Equal Opportunity Policy

1. Introduction

The International Bible Training College (IBTC)¹ recognizes that discrimination is unacceptable and is committed to the principle of equality regardless of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, political opinion or affiliation, social background, employment status, sex, marital status, domestic circumstances, age or disability, (taking into account) except where this comes into conflict with its Christian statement of beliefs and faith. The college will apply policies that are fair, equitable and consistent. Breaches of these policies will lead to investigation and, if appropriate, further action.

2. Purpose

The aim of the policy is to ensure that no-one is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds mentioned above.

The college will maintain a neutral working and training environment in which no-one feels under threat or intimidated.

3. Location of the policy

The college will ensure that the policy is available to all staff, students, and volunteers and will also be on the IBTC website: www.ibti.org.uk.

4. Definitions and scope

Equal opportunities, principles and practices will be applied consistently across all aspects of the training delivery, including admissions, curriculum development, teaching, assessment, student learning support and placement.

In seeking to achieve a balanced workforce at all levels, the college will ensure that no applicant, student, IBTC staff member or volunteer will be disadvantaged or treated less favorably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the job or programme of study. Reasonable adjustments will be made to arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for those with disability.

The IBTC is a member of the UK Evangelical Alliance, having accepted its statement of beliefs and faith. As part of their Charity Trust Deeds the IBTC have also their own statement of beliefs and faith. Therefore the college also reserves the right to deny, on the grounds of this statement, admission to applicants for study and work who blatantly and evidently live in ways contrary to these values.

¹ In all the following text International Bible Training College (IBTC) is referred to as IBTC and the Board of Directors/Trustees as Board. The college's trading name is IBTI.



5. Commitment

5.1. The Board, the Principal and Management Team are collectively committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all actual or potential applicants, staff, students, and volunteers taking into account its Christian statement of beliefs and faith, and to fostering a Christian culture of equality by:

- Making the Equal Opportunity policy available to all applicants, staff, students, and volunteers.
- Recognizing that Equal Opportunity issues are factors to be considered in all our activities and decision making.
- Ensuring that every member of the college community is treated fairly, with equal dignity and respect and is enabled to work or study in the best possible environment which is conducive to reaching one's own potential.

5.2. The college has developed procedures to tackle all forms of discrimination or harassment, both direct and indirect, recognizing the fact that individuals may suffer various forms of disadvantage. The college will work continuously to ensure that the environment for staff, students, and volunteers is harmonious and safe.

6. Reasonable adjustments ²

The Equality Act 2010 requires the IBTC to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled, would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

Section 6 of the Equality Act defines disability as a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' The IBTC is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. For example, a reasonable adjustment for a student who has a diagnosis of dyslexia could be to issue course documentation such as lecture notes, on coloured paper.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs for the college, unreasonable time-frames or if it affects the security or integrity of assessments. For example regarding assessments it is not appropriate to adjust standards where this would mean that the outcome did not provide a reliable indicator of knowledge, skills and understanding of the student. In relation to everyday life at the college it may not be reasonable for example to adapt the buildings facilities to accommodate severe or complex disabilities.

Where candidates are carrying out assessments, reasonable adjustments must not give the candidate an unfair advantage over other candidates carrying out the same or similar assessment. It may not be possible to make adjustments for some assessments.

² Adapted from 'Policy and Procedures for Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration', Nebosh, Version 13 November 2018

Where a learner may require an adjustment to enable them to complete their assessments, the academics manager will explore the matter and act accordingly by considering the college's resources.

7. Legal Framework

The IBTC will appraise itself of all legislative changes to ensure that it abides by its legal duties under current legislation of the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation. It will seek to develop best practice in all its activities and review this policy biannually.

8. Accountability and Responsibilities

8.1. The Board, regarding this policy, has the following responsibilities:

- a) To ensure that the college is compliant in all areas of equal opportunities.
- b) To ensure that this Equal Opportunity policy is regularly reviewed, monitored, maintained and implemented so that the college achieves excellent performance in this area.

8.2. The Management Team of IBTC must:

- a) Give a consistent and high profile lead on equality and diversity issues.
- b) Promote the Equal Opportunity policy, both inside and outside the college, and in all aspects of the college's operation and ensure that the Equality policy is implemented fully and effectively.
- c) Aim to ensure that information about its programmes of study and services is made available to the widest possible audience. All publicity and promotion will seek to avoid prejudice and stereotyping.
- d) Make sure that admissions and enrolment procedures will be as supportive and straightforward as possible. The criteria for admission will be as stated in the Admissions policy.
- e) Identify additional support needs and will, within resource constraints, meet those needs.
- f) Ensure that staff, students, and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities under the policy and are given appropriate information so that they can fulfil their responsibilities.
- g) Ensure that appropriate action, including formal discipline, is taken against staff, students, or volunteers who discriminate against or harass others.
- h) Treat all those connected with the college with respect and not engage in bias, stereotyping, harassment or discrimination.
- i) Vigorously oppose all forms of harassment and discrimination.

8.3. The Management Team and Staff of IBTC must:

- a) Take the lead in creating a positive environment for equal opportunities and putting the policy into practice, promoting equality and eliminating discrimination.
- b) Familiarise themselves with their statutory duties and those required by the college by attending training events and taking note of information disseminated on equal opportunities.
- c) Ensure that any other staff members, students or volunteers within their scope of responsibility are appropriately informed.
- d) Treat concerns raised with them by staff, students, and volunteers seriously and with sensitivity, investigating properly and, if appropriate, taking action against staff, students or volunteers who discriminate against or harass others.

- e) Know how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping, harassment and discrimination.
- f) Where appropriate, monitor patterns of participation and performance amongst different student groups and act on identified inequalities.
- g) Inform themselves of the content of the Equal Opportunity policy and monitor and familiarise themselves with changes.
- h) Act according to the principles laid down in the policy.
- i) Reflect the policy in their work responsibilities and in their teaching.

8.4. All Students must

- a) Ensure that they are aware of the content and implications of the policy.
- b) Ensure that they treat all members of the college with dignity and respect and that they do not engage in bias, stereotyping, harassment or discrimination.

8.5. Visitors and contractors must comply with the Equal Opportunity policy.

9. Complaints procedure

Any formal complaints of discrimination or harassment will be addressed through the IBTC Respect and Dignity Policy (Incorporating the Harassment Policy).

10. Compliance

The co-operation of all concerned is essential for the success of this policy. However, ultimate responsibility for achieving the policy's objectives and for ensuring compliance with the relevant existing legislation is the responsibility of the Board, the Principal and the Management Team. Behaviour or actions against the spirit and/or the letter of the law on which this policy is based will be considered a serious disciplinary matter and may, in some cases, lead to dismissal.

11. Mechanisms for feedback

Constructive comment for the continued improvement of this policy is welcomed and should be forwarded to the IBTC's Data Protection Officer at policies.data@ibti.org.uk.