



“Enabling Students to Accomplish their Academic Goal”

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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1. Introduction

Bellmont College is committed to supporting, developing and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all of its practices and activities. The College aims to provide a learning, teaching and working environment that is inclusive, accessible, respectful and free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying and other conduct that undermines dignity.

The College recognises that equality, diversity and inclusion are not separate from academic quality, student experience, staff wellbeing or regulatory compliance. They shape how applicants are recruited, how students learn and are assessed, how staff are appointed and supported, how complaints are handled, how safeguarding concerns are managed, and how the College monitors outcomes across the student and staff lifecycle.

Bellmont College currently works with Liverpool Hope University to deliver higher education provision through collaborative partnership arrangements. Under this partnership, students may study locally with Belmont College while the award, academic regulations, partner oversight and certain student protection or academic arrangements are governed through Liverpool Hope University processes, depending on the programme and partnership framework. Belmont College is also seeking Office for Students (OfS) approval for its own funding arrangements and future institutional development. This may affect future admissions, funding, student support, reporting, access and participation, governance or quality assurance processes. Belmont College manages any such changes carefully, transparently and proportionately, while continuing to protect student interests, equality of opportunity and continuity of study.

This policy is therefore designed to operate within the current Liverpool Hope University partnership and to remain suitable for future Belmont College regulatory or funding arrangements. Where Liverpool Hope University procedures or responsibilities apply, students are signposted clearly. Where Belmont College takes on additional responsibilities in future, Belmont College ensures that policies, reporting, data monitoring, complaints arrangements, reasonable adjustment processes and student protection measures remain fair, accessible and legally compliant.

Bellmont College values diversity and recognises that the College is strengthened by the different backgrounds, experiences, views, identities, cultures, abilities, ages, beliefs and life circumstances of its students, staff, governors, visitors and partners. The College is committed to creating a culture in which everyone is treated with dignity, courtesy and respect and has equitable opportunity to participate, belong, progress and succeed.

This policy is read alongside the College's wider governance, quality assurance, student support, safeguarding, admissions, staff employment, data protection, student protection and complaints frameworks. Where another policy is mentioned in this document, its full policy name is given in brackets to support clear navigation.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out Belmont College’s institutional framework for equality, diversity and inclusion. It explains the principles the College applies, the behaviours expected of students and staff, the legal and regulatory requirements that underpin the policy, the routes for reporting concerns, and the governance arrangements through which the policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed.

The policy aims to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in recruitment, admissions, induction, teaching, learning, assessment, student support, staff recruitment, employment practices, professional development, safeguarding, complaints, academic governance and student voice. It also aims to ensure that decisions are evidence-based, proportionate, transparent and subject to appropriate committee oversight.

In practical terms, the policy is intended to help Belmont College to:

- promote an inclusive and supportive environment that enables students and staff to achieve their full potential;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying;
- advance equality of opportunity and remove unnecessary barriers to participation and success;
- foster positive relationships between people with different backgrounds, beliefs, identities and experiences;
- ensure equitable access to learning opportunities, facilities, information and support services;
- promote dignity, respect, kindness, cultural awareness and professional behaviour across the College community;
- support widening participation, student retention, continuation, attainment and progression;
- ensure staff and students know how to raise concerns and how those concerns are handled; and
- provide the Board of Directors and senior committees with evidence that equality, diversity and inclusion are implemented in practice, not only stated in policy.

3. Regulatory and Legal Framework

The table below summarises the main legal, regulatory and sector expectations relevant to this policy. Belmont College applies these requirements proportionately, taking account of its current partnership arrangements with Liverpool Hope University and any future OfS registration or funding position.

Requirement / expectation	Relevance to Belmont College
Equality Act 2010	Protects against discrimination, harassment and victimisation; covers protected characteristics and reasonable adjustments.

Requirement / expectation	Relevance to Belmont College
Public Sector Equality Duty principles	Bellmont College considers equality of opportunity, elimination of discrimination and good relations where applicable.
Human Rights Act 1998	Supports proportionate decisions that respect privacy, religion or belief, expression, assembly and non-discrimination.
Higher Education and Research Act 2017 and OfS regulatory framework	Provides the OfS regulatory framework, including conditions on access, academic experience, support, outcomes, assessment, complaints, student protection and governance.
OfS Condition C5: Treating students fairly	Covers clear information, fair terms, complaints, refunds, compensation and student protection arrangements for relevant applications.
OfS Condition E6: Harassment and sexual misconduct	Covers reporting routes, support, sensitive information handling, training, credible investigations and fair decision-making where applicable.
OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register and Access and Participation expectations	Informs monitoring of access, on-course experience, academic support, personal support, mental health, cost pressures and progression.
UK Quality Code for Higher Education	Links EDI with quality assurance, learning resources, assessment, student engagement, enhancement and student success.
Competition and Markets Authority expectations and consumer protection law	Requires clear, accurate, timely and accessible information and fair, transparent processes.
Consumer Rights Act 2015 and Consumer Contracts Regulations 2013	Supports fair contractual information, costs, cancellation rights, support arrangements and complaint routes.
Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR	Requires lawful, fair, transparent and secure handling of personal, equality, health, safeguarding and complaint information.
Protection from Harassment Act 1997, criminal law and hate crime principles	Guides proportionate responses to serious harassment, threats, hate incidents, abuse or intimidation.

Requirement / expectation	Relevance to Belmont College
Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and Prevent Duty guidance	Requires due regard to Prevent duties, balanced with equality, safeguarding, freedom of speech and non-discrimination.
Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 and Education (No. 2) Act 1986 duties where applicable	Supports freedom of speech within the law and academic freedom while addressing unlawful conduct.
Safeguarding, health and safety and welfare legislation	Informs responses to safeguarding, welfare, mental health, disability support and health and safety risks.
Liverpool Hope University partnership requirements	Bellmont College works with Liverpool Hope University processes for partnership matters, including academic quality and student support.

4. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all members of the Belmont College community. This includes prospective students, applicants, current students, former students with ongoing matters, staff on permanent, fixed-term, temporary, sessional or consultancy contracts, governors, committee members, contractors, agency workers, visitors, guest speakers, placement partners, collaborative partners and third parties acting on behalf of the College.

The policy applies to all College activity, whether delivered on campus, online, through blended learning, at recruitment events, during meetings, through digital platforms, through social media connected to College activity, during student support interactions, in assessment processes, during placements or work-related activity, and in partnership delivery. It applies to conduct between students, staff and visitors, and to conduct affecting the College community even when it occurs away from College premises, where there is a sufficient connection with College activity or the safety, wellbeing, learning or working environment.

For students studying under the current Liverpool Hope University collaborative partnership, this policy applies to Belmont College's local teaching, support, recruitment, operational and community responsibilities. Where Liverpool Hope University academic regulations, student conduct procedures, complaints procedures or disability support processes apply, Belmont College signposts students and works with Liverpool Hope University as required. For future provision delivered under Belmont College's own funding or regulatory arrangements, Belmont College reviews and updates the policy and associated procedures so that responsibilities remain clear.

5. How this Policy Protects Applicants, Students and Staff Across the College Journey

Equality, diversity and inclusion are visible across the whole College journey. The table below summarises how the policy works in practice and where implementation is monitored.

Stage	What people can expect	Implementation route
Public information and outreach	Information is clear, accessible and not misleading. It helps people from diverse backgrounds understand opportunities, entry requirements, support, fees and routes into study.	Public information review; Recruitment, Admissions and Registry Committee; Quality Committee; <i>(QGP5 Belmont College Information Governance, Public Information and Transparency Policy)</i> .
Application and admission	Applicants are assessed fairly against relevant criteria. Reasonable adjustments are considered and non-traditional routes are supported where academically appropriate.	Admissions checks; widening participation monitoring; <i>(RAP1 Belmont College Recruitment, Selection and Admission Policy)</i> ; <i>(RAP4 Belmont College Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy)</i> .
Enrolment and induction	Students receive clear information about expected behaviour, support, reasonable adjustments, safeguarding, attendance, complaints, appeals and student voice.	Induction records; Student Staff Committee; <i>(QGP3 Belmont College Student Handbook)</i> .
Learning, teaching and assessment	Teaching, assessment and feedback are inclusive, accessible and designed to support students to demonstrate achievement fairly while maintaining academic standards.	Learning and Teaching Committee; Academic Committee; programme monitoring; <i>(LTP1 Belmont College Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy)</i> ; <i>(SWP1 Belmont College Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy)</i> .

Stage	What people can expect	Implementation route
Student support and wellbeing	Students are able to access academic, wellbeing, safeguarding, disability, mental health and adjustment support without avoidable barriers.	Student Staff Committee; Safeguarding Team; (<i>Bellmont College Student Support Plan and Policy</i>); (<i>SWP4 Belmont College Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy</i>).
Conduct, complaints and redress	Concerns about discrimination, harassment, bullying or unfair treatment are handled fairly, sensitively, promptly and without victimisation.	Complaint handling; student conduct processes; safeguarding routes; (<i>CAP3 Belmont College Complaint and Appeal Policy and Procedure</i>); (<i>Bellmont College Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy</i>).
Staff lifecycle	Staff recruitment, induction, training, supervision, progression, grievance and disciplinary processes are fair, inclusive and free from unlawful discrimination.	Senior Management Committee; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion function; HR records; (<i>HRP2 Belmont College Employee Handbook</i>); (<i>HRP4 Belmont College Equal Opportunities Policy Relating to Employment</i>).
Monitoring and enhancement	Bellmont College uses data, feedback, complaints, outcomes and committee evidence to identify barriers, monitor effectiveness and improve practice.	Quality Committee; Academic Committee; Senior Management Committee; Board of Directors annual assurance.

6. Core Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Principles

Bellmont College's approach is based on fairness, dignity, respect, accessibility, belonging, evidence-informed decision-making, accountability and continuous improvement. These principles apply to students and staff, and to the way the College works with visitors, partners and external organisations.

Principle	How Belmont College applies it
Fairness	People are treated on their individual merits, with decisions based on relevant evidence, clear criteria and proportionate judgement. Fairness also requires the College to identify where apparently neutral processes may create barriers.

Principle	How Belmont College applies it
Dignity and respect	All members of the Belmont College community behave with courtesy, professionalism and respect. Disagreement may occur in an academic environment, but it does not become unlawful harassment, abuse, intimidation or bullying.
Inclusion and belonging	The College seeks to create a learning and working environment in which people feel able to participate fully, ask for support, express lawful views, contribute to College life and develop their potential.
Accessibility	Information, services, teaching, assessment and procedures are accessible wherever reasonably possible. Reasonable adjustments are considered for disabled applicants, students and staff.
Transparency	Students, applicants and staff understand the standards expected, the support available, the routes for reporting concerns and the way decisions are made.
Accountability	EDI is implemented through named roles, committee oversight, records, evidence, monitoring and action plans. Responsibility is shared across Belmont College and is capable of being tracked and reviewed.
Partnership and student voice	Bellmont College listens to students and staff, including through representatives, surveys, committees, forums, complaints and informal feedback. Student voice is essential to understanding barriers and improving inclusion.
Continuous improvement	Bellmont College uses data, feedback, complaints, staff development, equality impact review and governance oversight to improve policy and practice over time.

7. Key Definitions and Forms of Unlawful Conduct

For the purposes of this policy, equality means ensuring that people are treated fairly and that barriers to opportunity are identified and addressed. Diversity means recognising and valuing difference. Inclusion means creating conditions in which people can participate, feel respected and access opportunities, support and decision-making fairly.

Bellmont College recognises the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief including lack of belief, sex and sexual orientation. The College also recognises that socio-economic background, caring responsibilities, commuting patterns, prior educational experience, digital access, language confidence and mental health may affect access, participation, belonging and outcomes, even where they are not protected characteristics in the same way under the Act.

Bellmont College does not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The following definitions guide how concerns are understood and triaged. They do not replace legal definitions or the detailed procedures in the

relevant complaints, conduct, staff or safeguarding policies.

Term	Meaning in this policy
Direct discrimination	Treating a person less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
Indirect discrimination	Applying a provision, criterion or practice that appears neutral but disadvantages people with a protected characteristic, unless it can be objectively justified.
Discrimination arising from disability	Treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something arising in consequence of disability, where the treatment cannot be justified.
Failure to make reasonable adjustments	Failing to take reasonable steps to remove or reduce substantial disadvantage experienced by a disabled person.
Harassment	Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
Sexual harassment and sexual misconduct	Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature and wider conduct covered by relevant OfS, safeguarding, staff and student conduct requirements.
Victimisation	Subjecting a person to detriment because they have made, supported or may make a complaint or allegation about discrimination or harassment.
Associative or perceptive discrimination	Unfair treatment because of a person's association with someone who has a protected characteristic, or because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic.
Bullying	Offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting or humiliating behaviour, or misuse of power, that undermines, humiliates or injures a person.
Hate incident	Any incident perceived by the victim or another person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a protected characteristic or identity.

8. Inclusive Public Information, Recruitment, Selection and Admissions

Bellmont College is committed to enabling applications from the widest appropriate pool of applicants for study and employment through fair, inclusive and transparent processes. Public information, marketing and recruitment communications are accurate, accessible and capable of being reasonably relied upon by applicants and students. This reflects Belmont College's consumer protection responsibilities and its commitments under the (*QGP5 Belmont College Information Governance, Public Information and Transparency Policy*).

Recruitment and admissions support equality of opportunity and widening participation. Applicants receive clear information about programme content, awarding body arrangements, entry requirements, fees, additional costs, delivery mode, location, attendance expectations, assessment methods, support services and relevant policies. For Liverpool Hope University collaborative provision,

applicants are told clearly which institution awards the degree, how partnership responsibilities operate and where Liverpool Hope University terms, regulations or procedures apply.

Selection criteria are relevant to the programme, transparent, consistently applied and capable of being justified. Interviews, written assessments and alternative entry assessments are conducted by appropriately trained staff, using fair criteria and records that explain the decision. Where reasonable adjustments are required during interviews, tests or other admissions activities, these are considered under the (*SWP1 Belmont College Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy*).

Bellmont College recognises that applicants may have different educational journeys. Applicants returning to education, applicants with non-traditional qualifications, applicants with interrupted study, care-experienced applicants, disabled applicants, mature applicants, commuting students and applicants from underrepresented communities are not disadvantaged by unnecessary barriers. Where appropriate, applicants may be considered through alternative assessment, contextual information or recognition of prior learning in accordance with the (*RAP4 Belmont College Accreditation of Prior Learning Policy*) and the (*RAP1 Belmont College Recruitment, Selection and Admission Policy*).

Admissions data, applicant complaints, conversion, enrolment, continuation and equality monitoring are reviewed by the Recruitment, Admissions and Registry Committee and reported to the Quality Committee, Safeguarding Team, Academic Committee and Senior Management Team where relevant. Material risks or persistent equality gaps are escalated to the Board of Directors through the governance route described in this policy.

9. Inclusive Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Student Participation

Bellmont College aims to ensure that teaching, learning, assessment and student participation are inclusive, academically rigorous and supportive. Inclusive practice does not lower academic standards. It seeks to ensure that students can access learning, understand expectations, participate meaningfully and demonstrate achievement fairly.

Programme teams consider inclusion when planning teaching materials, learning activities, assessment schedules, feedback, academic support, digital learning, classroom participation and group work. Staff avoid unnecessary barriers in the way information is presented, explain academic expectations clearly, and consider the needs of students with different educational backgrounds, disabilities, caring responsibilities, work commitments, religious observance, mental health needs, language confidence and digital access.

Assessment criteria are clear, relevant and applied consistently. Reasonable adjustments and special considerations are managed in accordance with the (*SWP1 Belmont College Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy*).

Academic integrity expectations are explained clearly and applied fairly under the (*LTP6 Belmont College Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy*).

Students are encouraged to participate fully in the academic, cultural and social life of Belmont College. Participation includes classroom engagement, student representation, student surveys, committee contribution, complaints and feedback, student forums and enhancement activities. The Student Staff Committee provides formal routes for students to raise issues affecting belonging, access, support, teaching, assessment, communication and the wider student experience.

The Learning and Teaching Committee monitors inclusive academic practice, progression, assessment, feedback, academic support and student engagement. The Academic Committee maintains academic oversight of standards, quality and the relationship between inclusive practice and student outcomes. The Quality Committee monitors quality assurance evidence and ensures that actions arising from student feedback and equality monitoring are recorded and completed.

10. Student Support, Disability Inclusion, Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility

Bellmont College is committed to ensuring that students can access appropriate academic, wellbeing, disability, mental health and pastoral support. Student support is a core part of equality of opportunity because students cannot benefit from higher education if they cannot access advice, learning resources, adjustment processes, safeguarding support or clear information.

Disabled applicants, students and staff may request reasonable adjustments. Belmont College considers such requests promptly, sensitively and individually. Adjustments may relate to admissions activity, teaching materials, access to buildings, digital resources, assessment arrangements, communication methods, attendance expectations, support meetings or working practices. Belmont College considers what is reasonable in the circumstances, taking into account effectiveness, practicality, cost, health and safety, academic standards and partnership or awarding body requirements.

Students are encouraged to disclose support needs as early as possible so that the College can consider adjustments and support arrangements. However, failure to disclose at an early stage does not automatically prevent consideration of reasonable adjustments later. Staff who receive disability, health or wellbeing information handle it sensitively and share it only with those who need to know for legitimate support, safety, academic or legal reasons, in line with the (*BCP5 Belmont College General Data Protection & Regulation (GDPR) Policy*).

Accessibility also includes clear communication. Key policies, forms, instructions and student-facing information is written in plain language wherever possible, published in accessible formats and made available in alternative formats where reasonable. Belmont College reviews accessibility through student feedback, complaints, website checks, support service reports, reasonable adjustment monitoring and committee oversight.

The Student Staff Committee monitors student support, wellbeing and accessibility issues. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion function considers equality implications and patterns. The Safeguarding Team monitors safeguarding and welfare concerns where relevant. The Quality Committee and Academic Committee receive assurance where support or accessibility issues affect academic quality, progression or student outcomes.

11. Dignity, Respect, Bullying, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Hate Incidents

Bellmont College expects all students, staff, governors, visitors and partners to behave respectfully and professionally. The College does not tolerate bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination, hate incidents, intimidation, victimisation or abuse. This applies to behaviour in person, online, through social media, by email, by message, in class, at events, during meetings, in student accommodation or placements where there is a connection with College activity.

Concerns may be raised through different routes depending on the circumstances. Student concerns may be raised through the (*CAP3 Belmont College Complaint and Appeal Policy and Procedure*), the (*Bellmont College Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy*), the (*HSP1 Belmont College Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy*) or relevant Liverpool Hope University routes where applicable. Staff concerns may be managed through the (*HRP2 Belmont College Employee Handbook*), the (*HRP3 Belmont College Staff Grievance and Disciplinary Policy*) or safeguarding arrangements. Belmont College helps individuals identify the right route and avoids unnecessary procedural barriers.

Reports are handled sensitively, fairly and proportionately. Belmont College considers immediate safety and wellbeing, support needs, evidence preservation, confidentiality, interim measures, the rights of all parties, and whether external agencies or Liverpool Hope University need to be involved. Where allegations involve harassment or sexual misconduct affecting students, Belmont College aligns its approach with OfS expectations, including clear information, reporting routes, support, staff training, fair investigations and communication of outcomes where appropriate.

Bellmont College does not victimise anyone for raising a concern in good faith or supporting another person to raise a concern. Malicious or knowingly false allegations may be addressed under relevant conduct procedures, but this provision does not discourage genuine reports. Some concerns may be difficult to evidence; this does not mean they were not raised in good faith.

Where the matter may also be a safeguarding concern, criminal matter or serious risk to health and safety, the College may take immediate protective action and may share information with appropriate external bodies where lawful, necessary and proportionate. Students and staff are signposted to support, including wellbeing, safeguarding, counselling or external specialist services where appropriate.

12. Staff Recruitment, Employment, Development and Workplace Inclusion

Bellmont College is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in staff recruitment, selection, induction, employment, professional development, performance review, promotion, grievance and disciplinary processes. The College recognises that staff wellbeing, belonging and professional confidence influence student experience and the quality of teaching, support and services.

Recruitment advertising encourages applications from all appropriate sectors of the community. Job descriptions, person specifications and recruitment advertisements are written around the essential and justifiable requirements of the role. Selection panels use relevant criteria, avoid assumptions, keep appropriate records and consider reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants. Safer recruitment requirements apply where roles involve contact with students, regulated activity, safeguarding responsibilities or access to sensitive information.

Staff are expected to complete EDI training relevant to their role and to apply that learning in professional practice. Staff with management or teaching responsibilities understand inclusive communication, reasonable adjustments, accessible teaching, unconscious bias, harassment prevention, safeguarding referral routes, data confidentiality and student support signposting. Staff involved in complaints, investigations, student conduct, safeguarding, admissions or assessment receive additional training appropriate to those responsibilities.

Staff discipline and grievance procedures are applied fairly, transparently and consistently. Allegations of discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour by staff are dealt with through the appropriate staff procedure and, where the conduct affects students, may also require safeguarding, student protection, Liverpool Hope University or regulatory reporting consideration. Confidentiality is respected, but the College may need to share information where necessary to investigate, protect individuals, meet legal obligations or comply with partner requirements.

The Senior Management Committee is responsible for ensuring that workplace inclusion is resourced and monitored. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion function reviews staff equality themes, training completion, concerns raised, action plans and staff feedback. The Board of Directors receives assurance that equality and inclusion are embedded in the College's employment and governance arrangements.

13. Safeguarding, PREVENT, Welfare, Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

Equality, safeguarding, welfare, Prevent, freedom of speech and academic freedom can sometimes overlap. Belmont College approaches these matters with care, proportionality and respect for the law. Belmont College does not use EDI processes to restrict lawful academic debate or lawful freedom of speech. Equally, freedom of speech does not protect unlawful discrimination, harassment, threats, intimidation, targeted abuse or conduct that breaches College policies.

Safeguarding concerns are referred and managed in accordance with the (*HSP1 Belmont College Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy*). Staff are alert to signs that a student or staff member may be at risk of harm, exploitation, abuse, radicalisation, harassment, domestic abuse, hate crime or serious mental health crisis. Safeguarding action is timely, recorded, proportionate and led by trained staff.

Prevent responsibilities are delivered in a way that is fair, evidence-based, non-discriminatory and consistent with the College's EDI commitments. Staff avoid stereotyping any religion, belief, ethnicity, nationality, political opinion or community. Prevent concerns are assessed on the basis of behaviour, vulnerability and risk, not identity.

The College also recognises the importance of lawful freedom of speech and academic freedom in higher education. Students and staff may encounter challenging ideas, disagreement or robust debate. Belmont College supports respectful dialogue, open enquiry and lawful expression while maintaining clear expectations of dignity, safety and non-harassment. External speakers, events and student activities are managed under relevant College procedures and risk assessment processes.

The Safeguarding Team monitors safeguarding, Prevent and welfare themes. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion function considers equality implications and risks of discriminatory practice. The Senior Management Committee monitors cross-cutting risks, and the Board of Directors receives assurance on significant safeguarding, PREVENT, equality, freedom of speech and reputational risks.

14. Pregnancy, Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Caring Responsibilities, Religion and Belief

Bellmont College recognises that students and staff may need support connected with pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption, fertility treatment, parental responsibilities, caring responsibilities, bereavement, religion or belief. Belmont College considers requests sensitively and seeks to remove unnecessary barriers while maintaining academic standards, professional requirements, safety and operational needs.

Students who are pregnant, on maternity-related absence, adopting, parenting or caring for dependants are encouraged to seek support early so that study planning, attendance, assessment, safeguarding, health and safety, finance, continuation or temporary interruption matters can be considered. Staff avoid assumptions about what the student can or cannot do and involve the appropriate student support or academic lead. Where Liverpool Hope University arrangements apply, Belmont College works with Liverpool Hope University procedures and support arrangements as necessary.

Requests connected with religion or belief include adjustments around major religious observance, dress, prayer, dietary needs, timetabling or assessment scheduling. Belmont College considers such requests reasonably and proportionately, taking account of academic requirements, notice given, health and

safety and equality for other students and staff. Belmont College does not tolerate discrimination or harassment based on religion or belief, including lack of belief.

The Student Staff Committee and Learning and Teaching Committee monitor themes relating to participation, support, timetable barriers, assessment barriers and student outcomes. Staff matters are considered through line management, HR processes, Senior Management Committee oversight and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion function.

15. Data Protection, Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Equality, diversity and inclusion work often involves sensitive personal data. This may include information about disability, health, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, caring responsibilities, safeguarding, complaints, conduct, criminal convictions, wellbeing or support needs. Belmont College handles such information lawfully, fairly, transparently and securely in accordance with the *(BCP5 Belmont College General Data Protection & Regulation (GDPR) Policy)*.

Information is normally shared only with staff who need it for legitimate operational, support, safety, academic, legal, safeguarding, quality assurance or regulatory purposes. Belmont College is clear with students and staff about why information is requested, how it is used, who may receive it, how long it is kept and how rights can be exercised. Where information is shared with Liverpool Hope University, an awarding body, the OfS, HESA, the Student Loans Company, safeguarding agencies, law enforcement or another lawful recipient, Belmont College ensures that sharing is necessary, proportionate and appropriately recorded.

Equality monitoring data may be used in anonymised or aggregated form to identify patterns, gaps, barriers or risks. This may include admissions, continuation, attainment, complaints, support access, reasonable adjustments, staff recruitment, training, disciplinary matters or student feedback. Data are interpreted carefully and in context. Small numbers are handled with caution to avoid identifying individuals.

Confidentiality does not mean that information can never be shared. Where there is a serious risk of harm, safeguarding concern, legal duty, regulatory obligation, public interest requirement or need to investigate a complaint or misconduct allegation, information may be shared with appropriate people or organisations. Belmont College shares only what is necessary and records the reason for doing so.

16. Breach of Policy, Reporting, Complaints and Redress

A breach of this policy may include unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying, sexual misconduct, hate incidents, failure to follow reasonable adjustment procedures, misuse of equality information, retaliatory behaviour, discriminatory decision-making, or failure by staff to escalate a serious concern. Breaches may be addressed through student conduct, staff disciplinary, grievance, safeguarding, complaints, risk management or partner procedures, depending on the circumstances.

Students and applicants who believe they have experienced discrimination, harassment or unfair treatment may raise the matter through the (*CAP3 Belmont College Complaint and Appeal Policy and Procedure*). Where the matter is urgent or involves risk of harm, it is raised immediately with student support, the safeguarding lead or another appropriate staff member under the (*HSP1 Belmont College Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy*). Academic appeals are separate from complaints and are handled under the (*CAP5 Belmont College Academic Appeals Policy*) or Liverpool Hope University procedures where applicable.

Staff concerns may be raised through line management, HR routes, the (*HRP2 Belmont College Employee Handbook*), the (*HRP3 Belmont College Staff Grievance and Disciplinary Policy*), the (*QGP7 Belmont College Whistleblowing and Public Concern Policy*) or safeguarding arrangements, depending on the concern. Visitors and third parties may raise concerns through the relevant College contact point or complaint route.

Bellmont College seeks to resolve concerns fairly and at the earliest appropriate stage, but informal resolution is not used where the seriousness of the allegation requires formal action. People involved in reports and investigations are treated with dignity and respect. Belmont College considers support for reporting parties, witnesses and respondents. Decisions are evidence-based, proportionate and recorded.

Complaint, conduct and safeguarding themes are monitored by relevant committees so that recurring issues inform training, policy review, student support, risk management, public information, learning and teaching enhancement and staff development. Where internal procedures are completed and the matter falls within scope, students are signposted to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator or the appropriate Liverpool Hope University route.

17. Collaborative Provision with Liverpool Hope University and Future OfS Funding Arrangements

Bellmont College currently works with Liverpool Hope University to deliver higher education provision. Public information from Belmont College and Liverpool Hope University confirms that Belmont College recruits students to a Liverpool Hope University degree pathway and that the BA (Hons) Business Management with Foundation Year is a Liverpool Hope University degree delivered locally with access to University online resources. This means that equality, inclusion and student protection responsibilities may be shared or coordinated, depending on the matter.

Where Liverpool Hope University regulations, policies or procedures apply, Belmont College explains this clearly to students and staff. This may include arrangements for student contracts, academic regulations, reasonable adjustments, complaints, appeals, student protection, academic standards, partner monitoring, student support or data sharing. Belmont College does not create local processes that conflict with Liverpool Hope University requirements. Where Belmont College processes apply locally, Belmont College ensures that students receive accessible information and appropriate support.

The College is also seeking OfS approval for its own funding arrangements and future institutional development. Future approval could change responsibilities relating to access and participation, student protection, student contracts, direct funding, reporting, governance, complaints, student support or equality monitoring. The Board of Directors and Senior Management Committee ensure that any transition is risk assessed, communicated and governed through the appropriate committees. Students are informed of material changes, and Belmont College continues to protect student interests and equality of opportunity throughout any transition.

If partnership or regulatory changes create risks for students, Belmont College uses the *(CAP1 Belmont College Student Protection Plan and Policy)*, the *(CAP2 Belmont College Consumer Protection Policy and Implementation Framework)*, the *(BCP1 Belmont College Risk Management Policy)* and relevant Liverpool Hope University arrangements to protect continuity of study, support, accurate information, complaint routes and fair treatment.

18. Roles and Responsibilities

Equality, diversity and inclusion are shared responsibilities. Belmont College uses clear role ownership so that actions are implemented, monitored and escalated through the governance and accountability structure set out in *(QGP1 Belmont College Quality Handbook)* and *(QGP2 Belmont College Management, Committee Structure, Organogram and Terms of Reference)*.

Role	Responsibilities
Board of Directors	Governing body with overall authority for Belmont College business. Approves the governance framework, scheme of delegation and committee terms of reference, and retains ultimate oversight of equality, diversity and inclusion as part of academic quality, standards, student outcomes, regulatory compliance, risk, financial sustainability and institutional performance.
Audit & Risk Committee	Mandatory Board committee that advises the Board of Directors on audit arrangements, internal control, risk management, financial sustainability, regulatory compliance and assurance over OfS requirements. It oversees risks relating to equality, safeguarding, student protection, information governance and regulatory compliance.
Academic Committee	Mandatory Board committee and academic authority. It promotes academic and professional work, safeguards academic standards and quality, oversees academic

	assurance from the Quality Committee and receives assurance on inclusive learning, assessment, student outcomes and academic equality risks.
Senior Management Committee	Operational management forum responsible for planning, resourcing, delivery, implementation and management reporting. It provides operational oversight of equality, diversity and inclusion actions across academic and professional services and escalates significant matters through the appropriate governance route.
Quality Committee	Subcommittee of the Academic Committee responsible for academic quality assurance, enhancement, student outcomes, assessment standards and academic quality risk monitoring. It monitors equality-related academic risks and actions and escalates operational actions to the Senior Management Committee where required.
Chief Executive Officer	Holds executive accountability for implementing Board-approved strategy and ensuring institutional leadership, regulatory compliance, financial sustainability, quality assurance, inclusive culture and successful student outcomes.
Head of Quality & Operations	Leads and oversees the quality assurance framework, policy review cycle, committee reporting, compliance monitoring, equality impact review and action tracking. The role coordinates reporting through the Senior Management Committee, Quality Committee and Academic Committee routes.
Head of Academic Programmes	Provides academic leadership for programme quality and standards, including inclusive learning, teaching, assessment, academic support, academic integrity, progression and programme monitoring. The role escalates concerns affecting standards, student outcomes or inclusion.
Head of Professional Services	Oversees professional services that support students across the student lifecycle, including recruitment, admissions, registry, student support and outcomes monitoring. The role ensures effective support provision, fair applicant selection, regulatory compliance and data-informed improvement of continuation, completion and progression outcomes.

Head of IT & Human Resources	Ensures robust staff recruitment, staff development, fair employment practices and secure, reliable and accessible digital systems that support teaching, data management, student support and regulatory reporting.
Programme Coordinator	Ensures effective delivery of teaching, learning and assessment at module or block level, maintaining alignment with learning outcomes, student engagement, inclusive academic support and the integrity of assessment practice.
Safeguarding Team	Coordinates safeguarding and Prevent referrals, welfare risk assessment, harassment and sexual misconduct triage, record keeping and liaison with academic, support, external and partner agencies where appropriate.
Learning, Teaching and Assessment Staff	Apply inclusive teaching, assessment and feedback practice, communicate expectations clearly, identify support needs, respond to student concerns and escalate barriers or incidents promptly.
Admissions and Registry Staff	Apply fair and transparent admissions and records processes, handle applicant and student data securely, support reasonable adjustments and monitor admissions equality risks.
Student Support and Wellbeing Staff	Provide accessible support, signposting, reasonable adjustment coordination, wellbeing support and referral routes while maintaining confidentiality and safeguarding awareness.
All Staff	Read and apply this policy, complete relevant training, act respectfully, avoid discriminatory practice, protect confidentiality, support reasonable adjustments and report concerns.
Students	Treat others with dignity and respect, comply with this policy and the (<i>Bellmont College Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy</i>), participate constructively, report concerns and engage with support or investigation processes where required.
Visitors, contractors and partners	Respect Bellmont College's inclusive culture and comply with equality, safeguarding, conduct and health and safety

	expectations while undertaking Belmont College-related activity.
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19. Governance and Committee Implementation Framework

Equality, diversity and inclusion are implemented through Belmont College's governance and committee structure. The structure reflects the Quality Handbook model of strategic governance, operational delivery, monitoring and assurance. It enables equality, student experience, academic quality, risk, safeguarding, admissions, support and staff matters to be identified, assigned, acted on, reported and escalated through the appropriate route.

The implementation model is: identify the issue; assess equality and student impact; assign an owner; take corrective or preventive action; report to the relevant committee; escalate material risk; check completion; and use learning to strengthen future practice.

Committee / Body	Governance and implementation role
Board of Directors	Provides strategic governance, scrutiny and assurance. It approves the policy, receives equality and student protection assurance, reviews material risks and challenges unresolved issues affecting students, staff, quality, compliance or institutional culture.
Audit & Risk Committee	Advises the Board of Directors on audit, internal control, risk management and compliance. It reviews equality-related risks where they affect safeguarding, student protection, data protection, continuity, public information, regulatory compliance or institutional reputation.
Academic Committee	Acts as the academic authority and receives academic assurance from the Quality Committee. It considers equality and inclusion where these affect academic standards, learning opportunities, assessment, continuation, completion, progression and student outcomes.
Senior Management Committee	Leads operational implementation across academic and professional services. It coordinates resourcing, staffing, training, risk management, policy actions and cross-department implementation, and escalates

	significant matters to the appropriate Board or academic governance route.
Quality Committee	Provides academic quality assurance and enhancement oversight. It monitors quality evidence, student outcomes, complaints and appeals themes, inclusive practice actions, public information and completion of equality-related quality actions.
Learning and Teaching Committee	Reviews inclusive learning, teaching, assessment, feedback, academic support, learning resources, student engagement and programme-level enhancement. It reports relevant matters through the Quality Committee and Academic Committee route.
Recruitment, Admissions and Registry Committee	Monitors fair access, admissions practice, applicant information, equality data, widening participation, registration, student records and data integrity. It escalates material equality or admissions risks through the quality and senior management routes.
Student Staff Committee	Provides a formal student voice route for matters affecting belonging, access, support, learning, assessment, communication, facilities and the student experience. It reports themes and actions through the Quality Committee and Academic Committee route.
Safeguarding Team	Monitors safeguarding, Prevent, welfare, harassment, sexual misconduct and hate incident themes where relevant. It ensures proportionate, non-discriminatory response and escalates significant risks through safeguarding, senior management and governance routes.
Liverpool Hope University partnership governance routes	Where collaborative provision applies, relevant outputs from Liverpool Hope University Operational Group, Academic Oversight Group and Strategic Oversight Group are considered through Belmont College internal governance. Academic assurance routes through Quality Committee and Academic Committee; operational matters route through Senior Management Committee; risk and compliance matters route through Audit & Risk Committee and the Board of Directors.

20. Training, Monitoring, Equality Impact, Audit and Evidence

Bellmont College maintains training and awareness activity so that staff understand their responsibilities under this policy. Training is proportionate to role. All staff receive general EDI awareness, while staff involved in admissions, teaching, assessment, student support, safeguarding, complaints, conduct, management or governance may require more specialised training.

Training may cover equality law, protected characteristics, unconscious bias, inclusive communication, reasonable adjustments, accessible teaching, harassment and sexual misconduct, safeguarding and PREVENT, freedom of speech, data protection, complaint handling, investigation practice, trauma-informed response, and partnership responsibilities. Training completion is recorded and monitored by the relevant manager or committee.

Monitoring includes both quantitative and qualitative evidence. Belmont College reviews admissions data, continuation, completion, progression, attainment, support use, reasonable adjustment requests, complaints, academic appeals, safeguarding themes, harassment reports, student survey results, staff feedback, training records, committee actions and risk registers. Where data suggests differential outcomes or barriers, Belmont College investigates proportionately and develop actions.

Equality impact review is used for new or revised policies, significant operational changes, programme changes, student protection measures, major public information changes, changes to admissions criteria, changes to assessment arrangements, restructuring of services and material partnership or funding changes. Equality impact review considers who may be affected, what barriers may arise, whether evidence is sufficient, what mitigation is available, and how actions are monitored.

Bellmont College retains evidence to demonstrate implementation. Evidence may include committee minutes, reports, action logs, equality impact assessments, training records, website review records, complaints summaries, appeals summaries, anonymised safeguarding themes, reasonable adjustment records, student feedback, staff feedback, risk registers, public information audits, policy approval records and annual review reports. Evidence is stored securely and processed in line with the *(BCP5 Belmont College General Data Protection & Regulation (GDPR) Policy)*.

21. Conclusion

Bellmont College is committed to creating and sustaining a College community where students, staff and visitors are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect, and where everyone has equitable opportunity to participate, belong, progress and succeed. Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to the College's mission of enabling students to accomplish their academic goals.

This policy strengthens Belmont College's commitment to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good relations, promoting inclusive learning and working environments, and responding fairly to concerns. It

also explains how the College implements, monitors and reviews EDI through governance, committees, evidence, training, data, student voice, staff engagement, risk management and annual review.

Bellmont College continues to work with Liverpool Hope University under current collaborative arrangements and manages any future OfS funding or regulatory developments in a way that protects students, supports equality of opportunity, maintains academic standards and preserves trust in the College’s governance and student support arrangements.

Bellmont College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy					
Version	Date	Author(s)	Amendments	Approved by	Next review
1	March 2023	Head of Quality and Operations	New Document	Board of Governors	February 2024
2	February 2024	Head of Quality and Operations	Revised; no update or changes made	Board of Governors	October 2024
3	October 2024	Head of Quality and Operations	Revised Document	Board of Governors	October 2025
4	March 2026	Head of Quality and Operations	Revised Document	Board of Directors	March 2027