

Our commitment to religion and belief equality

- Stafford College is committed to equality and diversity; these are part of our core values.
- We aim to be an inclusive organisation where everyone has a fair opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for people of all religions and beliefs.
- For the first time in 2001, the National Census collected information about religious identity and 85% of the population of England and Wales stated they followed a religion – the two largest groups being Christian (70%) and Muslim (3%).
- In Britain today there are currently nine major faith and belief systems:
Christianity, Islam (Muslims), Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, Ba'hai, Zoroastrian.

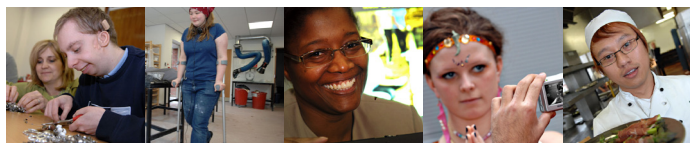
For more info

Equality Challenge Unit – the HE equality body:
www.ecu.ac.uk

Commission on Equality and Human Rights established in October 2007, incorporating the main equality commissions and covering all equality issues including religion and belief: www.cehr.org.uk

Faith and Belief in Further Education – fbfe is a national independent inter-faith charity working with the learning and skills sector, faith and local communities and national and local faith/belief based groups: www.fbfe.org.uk Stafford College is a member the National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education.

The BBC website - An excellent resource for religion and belief. A portal to the A-Z of religions and includes interfaith calendar etc - www.bbc.co.uk/religion



This leaflet is part of a series highlighting different aspects of equality.

All of the leaflets contain important information regarding rights and responsibilities concerning equality and discrimination legislation.

They also show how Stafford College promotes equality and diversity and is working to create an inclusive college committed to equality and diversity.

Other leaflets include:

- Age Equality
- Disability Equality
- Gender Equality
- Race Equality
- Equality & Diversity
- Sexual Orientation Equality

All leaflets are available at the main reception areas around the College and the College Library. They are also available on our website.

Should you require the information in an alternative format or wish to discuss any aspect of equality and diversity, please contact our Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator, via email

t.guest@staffordcoll.ac.uk

or on **01785 275691**



What you need to know about Religion and Belief Equality



“Stafford College will meet learner needs and aspirations through excellence in education and training.”

(Stafford College Mission Statement)

“To provide an inclusive college committed to the principle of equality and diversity.”

(Stafford College Corporate Aim)

Legal background

- The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 ensure that direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment on the grounds of religion or belief are outlawed.
- The Regulations apply to all aspects of employment.
- In higher education students are also covered under the regulations.
- The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 amends the Public Order Act 1986, to create offences involving inciting hatred against persons on religious grounds – the legislation ensures that people are protected against harm because of their religious beliefs or lack of religious beliefs.
- Part 2 of the Equality Act 2006, Discrimination on the Grounds of Religion or Belief, came into force on 30 April 2007 and makes it unlawful to discriminate in the area of goods, facilities and services on the grounds of religion or belief.
- In the higher education context, this means that provision offered in the area of accommodation and dietary requirements, for example, may be subject to this legislation.

Your rights

Your rights while studying or working at Stafford College are:

- the right to an environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of your religion or belief.

Religion equality facts

Did you know that:

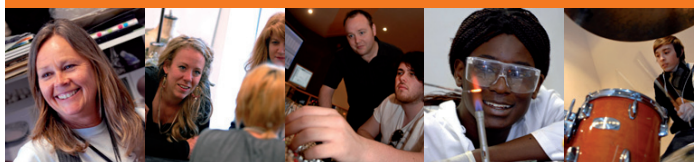
according to the 2001 census:

- 41,000,000 people said they were Christian – that's over 70% of the population
- over 50% of the non-Christian population with a religious belief are Muslim (that's 1.6 million people – 3% of the total population)
- 151,000 people belonged to a religious group other than the main religions. This included 32,000 Spiritualist, 31,000 Pagan, 7000 Wicca and 4,000 Rastafarian
- 15% of the population reported having no religion

Your responsibilities

Your responsibilities while studying or working at Stafford College are:

- not to discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief
- as a member of staff, to ensure that the relevant functions of the institution do not discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief
- as a member of staff, to be adequately prepared to deal with incidents of harassment, discrimination or victimisation associated with an individual's religion or belief
- to be willing to identify and challenge religious bias and stereotyping.



Supporting services

- Stafford College has a Chaplaincy Team which includes a multi-faith element and aims to provide facilities for all staff and students – those with a religious belief and those with none.
- The Chaplains work together at Stafford College to offer a spiritual resource for students and staff. They are available on a regular basis for private conversation and public discussion on any matter of concern.
- A Faith room is available in College for those wishing to find a place for quiet reflection or prayer.
- If you wish to be involved or comment on any aspect of the College's work regarding religion or belief equality please contact:

Tony Guest, Equality & Diversity Officer Coordinator
Email: t.guest@staffordcoll.ac.uk
Tel: 01785 275691

Chaplains

Rev. Tim Lowe
Tel: 01785 223327 (Church)
01785 225474 (Home)

Fr. Mark McIntyre
Tel: 01785 606908

Linda Perham (Staff member)
Ext 4117
Email: chaplains@staffordcoll.ac.uk

