South Thames Colleges Group

Carshalton College | Kingston College | Merton College | South Thames College

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy 2026–2028

1. Policy Purpose and Context

This policy sets out expectations for Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) across the Group. It aligns with the TLA Strategy 2026–2028 and establishes a framework for delivering high-quality, inclusive educational experiences for all learners.

This policy is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010 and the Group's commitment to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations between individuals and groups

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure consistently high-quality teaching, learning and assessment
- Embed a culture of professional excellence, collaboration and continuous improvement
- Place impact on learners at the centre of practice
- Ensure inclusive, equitable access and outcomes for all learners

2. Vision for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Excellence. Everywhere. Every day.

This means:

- Excellent teaching grounded in strong pedagogy and subject expertise
- Sustained progress for all learners from their starting points
- Inclusive, supportive environments where all learners can thrive

3. Principles of Excellent and Inclusive Practice

3.1 Impact on Learners

High-quality teaching enables all learners to:

- Make sustained progress
- Develop deep understanding
- Become independent and confident learners
- Achieve ambitious outcomes regardless of background or protected characteristic

3.2 Evidence-Informed and Inclusive Pedagogy

Teachers:

- Use evidence-informed approaches
- Sequence learning effectively
- Use assessment to identify gaps for all groups
- Adapt teaching to address barriers linked to disadvantage or protected characteristics

3.3 Adaptive, Inclusive and Accessible Teaching

Teaching will:

- Be responsive to diverse learner needs and starting points
- Provide reasonable adjustments for learners with disabilities or additional needs

- Use inclusive, trauma-informed approaches
- Ensure accessibility in physical and digital environments
- Support learners with protected characteristics to fully participate and succeed

3.4 Aspirational and Safe Learning Environments

Teachers create:

- Safe, respectful, inclusive environments
- Zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment or bias
- High expectations for all learners

3.5 Professional Collaboration and Development

Staff:

- Engage in continuous professional development on inclusive practices
- Undertake training in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), including unconscious bias and inclusive curriculum design

3.6 Leadership of Teaching and Learning

Leaders:

- Monitor outcomes across protected characteristics
- Address attainment gaps proactively
- Ensure equitable provision and inclusive practice

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Practice

The Group actively promotes EDI through:

- Inclusive curriculum design reflecting diverse perspectives
- Anti-discriminatory and anti-racist practice
- Respect for all protected characteristics, including:
    - Age
    - Disability
    - Gender reassignment
    - Marriage and civil partnership
    - Pregnancy and maternity
    - Race
    - Religion or belief
    - Sex
    - Sexual orientation

Teaching and curriculum will:

- Avoid bias and stereotyping
- Promote representation and inclusivity
- Support positive learner identity and belonging

5. The TLA Framework: Consistency → Mastery → Excellence

The Group's approach remains structured through:

- **Consistency** – secure baseline inclusive practice for all learners
- **Mastery** – expert adaptation for diverse learner contexts
- **Excellence** – innovative and impactful inclusive teaching

6. Expectations for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

6.1 Curriculum and Planning

Teachers will:

- Plan ambitious and inclusive curricula

- Reflect diverse perspectives and experiences
- Account for protected characteristics in curriculum design

6.2 Teaching Practice
Teachers will:
- Use inclusive, adaptive strategies
- Remove barriers to learning
- Use digital tools that meet accessibility standards

6.3 Assessment
Assessment will:
- Include **reasonable adjustments** where required
- Be fair, accessible and inclusive
- Allow flexibility for pregnancy, disability, religious observance and other needs

6.4 Learner Experience
Learners will:
- Feel safe, respected and included
- Have equitable access to learning
- Be supported to succeed regardless of background

6.5 English, Maths and Digital Skills
Provision will:
- Support equitable access to essential skills
- Address gaps linked to disadvantage

6.6 Personal Development and Employability
Teaching will:
- Promote equality, diversity, inclusion and sustainability
- Prepare learners for diverse workplaces and communities

7. Learner Support and Reasonable Adjustments
The Group will:
- Provide clear processes for disclosure of support needs
- Ensure timely implementation of reasonable adjustments
- Comply with SEND Code of Practice
- Use assistive technologies where appropriate
- Support learners returning from absence (e.g. maternity)

8. Quality Assurance and Improvement
8.1 Approach
Quality assurance will include evaluation of:
- Inclusivity of teaching
- Learner outcomes by protected characteristic
- Effectiveness of adjustments and support

8.2 Monitoring Equality Outcomes
The Group will monitor:
- Achievement and progression gaps
- Participation and retention
- Learner experience across groups

8.3 Learner Voice
Learner voice will:

- Include targeted engagement with underrepresented groups
- Inform inclusive practice improvements

9. Professional Development
The Group will ensure staff:

- Receive mandatory EDI and inclusive teaching training
- Develop skills in adaptive teaching and accessible assessment
- Engage with anti-racist and inclusive curriculum approaches

10. Roles and Responsibilities
Teachers

- Deliver inclusive, high-quality teaching
- Implement reasonable adjustments
- Promote respectful and inclusive environments

Middle Leaders

- Monitor equality outcomes and gaps
- Support inclusive practice within teams

Senior Leaders

- Ensure compliance with Equality Act 2010
- Provide strategic oversight of equality in TLA

11. Measuring Impact
Impact will be evaluated through:

- Progress and achievement by protected characteristic
- Reduction of attainment gaps
- Learner experience and belonging
- Staff capability in inclusive practice

12. Review and Implementation
This policy:

- Will be reviewed regularly with reference to equality data
- Will be implemented through aligned systems and staff development
- Will be subject to ongoing Equality Impact Assessment

13. Commitment Statement
The Group is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where every learner has equitable opportunity to achieve their potential. This policy ensures teaching, learning and assessment practices actively promote equality, remove barriers and support success for all.