

British values and the curriculum – English

The Prevent duty requires providers and practitioners to exemplify British values in their practice and to use opportunities to explore British values and to challenge extremism.

British values are defined as including:

“democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.”

This includes complying with the Equality Act 2010 and preventing discrimination against those with protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief;
- sex
- sexual orientation.

The Prevent duty also includes an expectation that staff will encourage students to respect other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Behaviour in classrooms, workshops and workplaces

Effective learning and work takes place in classrooms where there is tolerance and mutual respect for different faiths and beliefs as well as respect for people with protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act.

Learners in the workplace should also be aware of the need to ensure that no one in protected groups is discriminated against. Those employers who allow discrimination to take place have been prosecuted using the Equality duty.

By maintaining high standards of behaviour, including mutual respect and tolerance for different faiths and beliefs and encouraging learners to respect the protected characteristics, class teachers, lecturers and trainers will be promoting British values.

The law and democracy

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English at all levels provides opportunities for discussions that focus on both democracy and the rule of law. Texts can be chosen to allow students to explore the issue of rule of law and equally, they can be chosen to refer to issues around democracy. Students are introduced to a range of texts and types of writing. This could include media articles referring to aspects of the democratic process, such as members of the public making a peaceful protest, including petitions and letter writing to local politicians. Political texts could be analysed for persuasive language.

Television, social media, including blogs, and radio reports can be analysed to show how persuasive techniques and language are used to present or manipulate the reader, viewer or listener.

This will support students in developing a critical analysis for all forms of media and to build resilience to resist exploitation by extremists or others who may want to take advantage of vulnerable individuals.

Individual liberty

Students and apprentices can explore individual liberty through a study of texts, audio and video. English gives numerous opportunities to explore individual liberty as a concept and as part of British values.

English learners will usually have considered what their options were and used their individual liberty to select from them before they chose their course or apprenticeship. They will also have choices to make while they take their current qualification and they will often have choices to make as they consider further education, training or careers after completing the apprenticeship or course.

Challenging extremism

The Prevent duty is not intended to stop students or apprentices debating controversial ideas.

If students or apprentices make comments that could be regarded as extremist, staff should encourage the students or apprentices to consider:

- what they have said
- where the views they are expressing came from
- whether the evidence they have is accurate and full
- whether they have received a partial or incorrect interpretation of evidence
- alternative interpretations and views
- whether they need to make a referral to the designated safeguarding lead.

Staff should use opportunities to challenge extremist narratives through discussions with students or apprentices. If staff do not feel confident in challenging extremist ideas with their students or apprentices, they should ask for support.

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If students or apprentices behave in a way that contravenes the equality and diversity aspects of the code of conduct that they have signed, then this is a disciplinary issue, e.g., refusing to work with a gay student or apprentice or a student or apprentice of a different ethnicity.

Applying British values to English: Example	
British values	English - all levels
Rule of law	<p>Texts can be chosen that will give students a chance to explore the rule of law. This may be through studying written, audio or visual materials in which individuals choose to behave within or outside the law or it may be about the impact of laws.</p> <p>Class or one-to-one discussions offer opportunities to explore the rule of law within the UK. This may also give the opportunity to challenge extremism.</p>
Democracy	<p>The process of facilitating classroom debates can be used to link to democracy as they should allow all opinions to be heard in a respectful way. This will reinforce the concept of democracy. Texts, audio or videos, written tasks and discussions all present opportunities to discuss or write about topics that relate to democracy.</p>
Individual liberty	<p>Group and one-to-one discussions and the use of materials may give the opportunity to discuss the extent of individual liberty. Students will often explore aspects of their own lives and the extent to which they have and use their freedoms.</p> <p>Students will also explore choices in terms of future education choices and careers.</p>
Tolerance and mutual respect of different faiths and beliefs and promotion of the Equality duty	<p>In English there are often opportunities to discuss tolerance and mutual respect through discussions and the choice of materials that are studied.</p> <p>Good working relationships in the classroom or the workplace for students or apprentices promote effective learning. These are based on mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs and compliance with the Equality duty.</p>