

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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1. POLICY

The Federation is committed to promoting equality and diversity, providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all. In the implementation of this policy we will:

- ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction;
- promote diversity and equality for all staff and value the contributions made by individuals and groups of people from diverse cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and distinctive backgrounds;
- promote and sustain an inclusive and supportive study and work environment which affirms the equal and fair treatment of individuals in fulfilling their potential and does not afford unfair privilege to any individual or group;
- treat part-time staff fairly and equally;
- challenge inequality and less favourable treatment wherever practicable;
- promote an environment free of harassment and bullying on any grounds in relation to all staff.

We do not discriminate against staff on the basis of age, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion, faith or belief (Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics). The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff and Directors treat visitors, volunteers, contractors and former staff members.

2. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Federation Trust (Finance and Resources Committee) has responsibility for the effective implementation of the policy. The policy will be reviewed at least every two years, to ensure it remains commensurate with the law and best practice. The Senior Leader with responsibility for equalities issues will oversee the implementation of this policy.

The Resources Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of all equal opportunities policies and procedures and reporting on the progress made in achieving equalities targets to the full Trust. The Executive Principal has overall delegated responsibility for co-ordinating the day-to-day operation of the policies and procedures with the Senior Leadership Team.

3. RESPONSIBILITY AND LIABILITY

All members of staff remain personally responsible for ensuring that they act within the law. The Federation Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that all staff perform their duties in a lawful manner and that proper training and support is provided accordingly. In certain circumstances the Federation could be vicariously liable for actions carried out by staff purportedly in the Federation's name. Any member of staff may be personally liable if, whilst on Federation business and despite guidance and training from the Federation, they behave illegally.

4. RELATED POLICIES

All Federation policies and procedures comply with the Equality and Diversity policy. The following directly relevant policies and procedures support the Federation implementation process:

- Student Management.
- Equal Value Policy.

Equality and diversity awareness will be built into all Federation planning and review processes.

All related policies, procedures and action plans will be implemented with the co-operation of and in consultation with staff, students and Trade Union representatives.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Federation will monitor the implementation of the policy and all associated equality action plans.

6. ACTION PLANNING

- 6.1 Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed and updated in the light of emerging equalities legislation and guidance offered to all relevant staff on drafting job descriptions and person specifications. Annual data monitoring will be undertaken in relation to recruitment, selection, appraisal, promotion, pay, grading, disciplinary cases, grievances and harassment in respect of gender, age, disability and race/ethnicity. Areas of identified inequality will be addressed.

6.2 TRAINING

All Federation employees and Directors undertaking recruitment and selection will be trained in equality issues. All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.

7. COMPLAINTS

- 7.1 Any member of staff may pursue a grievance relating to their employment via the Grievance Policy. Staff who experience bullying or harassment should follow the procedure outlined in the Federation Grievance and Safeguarding policies.

8. EQUALITY AIMS

DISABILITY

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate. If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you should speak to your line manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your line manager may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled workers, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonable, we will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

EMPLOYMENT

We will ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action. We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory. We monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities.

GENDER

Workforce targets will be maintained and reviewed. The Federation will promote a positive work/life balance environment and develop family friendly policies.

AGE

The Federation will eliminate unlawful age discrimination and will review policies to ensure that they comply with age discrimination legislation. Monitoring will be undertaken to identify any areas of inequality.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The Federation will eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. Policies will be reviewed to ensure that they comply fully with legislation on sexual orientation.

RELIGION

The Federation includes people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds and will respect the needs and requirements of people who adhere to a range of cultural and religious beliefs.

RACE/ETHNIC ORIGIN

The Federation will ensure participation of black and minority ethnic groups in all its activities. Monitoring will be undertaken to identify any areas of inequality.