



# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Leeds Arts University has a culture that values openness, fairness and transparency for our staff and students.
- 1.2 This policy outlines how we will continue to fulfil our responsibilities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion as well as tackling and eliminating discrimination in order to maintain this culture.

## 2 Scope

- 2.1 The policy is applicable to all staff whether permanent or temporary, workers, students, and contractors whilst on our premises and to online as well as face to face contact between students, staff and staff and students. The standards of this policy are also upheld and embraced by our Board of Governors. The policy applies to all processes relating to the activities of the University.

## 3 General principles

- 3.1 We celebrate and value the diversity of our students and staff, and believe that we will benefit from employing a diverse workforce at all levels of responsibility, and across all areas of work and by encouraging both a staff and student population which is representative of the wider society. Through seeking to maintain a representative workforce we endeavour to provide role models across the curriculum and the various functions of the organisation. We are committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and students.
- 3.2 We seek to foster an environment based on good relations between all groups which are represented within our community. The aim is to create a positive inclusive ethos with a shared commitment to challenging and preventing stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination and to respecting diversity and difference. We will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against our employees or students, either from other staff, students, contractors or members of the public in relation to any protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are defined in legislation, but can be summarised as:
  - age
  - disability
  - gender reassignment
  - marriage and civil partnership
  - pregnancy and maternity
  - race
  - religion or belief
  - sex
  - sexual orientation

The University has chosen to recognise and adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

- 3.3 All staff and students should be treated with respect and dignity, and work in a positive environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The University will not

accept behaviours, actions or words which demonstrate prejudice, harassment, discrimination, or victimisation whether overt or covert (such as micro-aggressions) in transgression of this policy. This includes behaviours not only on our premises, but also online, on trips or any event where contact occurs as a result of studying at or being employed by the university. Such behaviours, actions or words will be investigated in line with the University's disciplinary policy for staff or students, and appropriate action taken in line with those policies depending on the circumstances of the case. In these circumstances the investigations will be led by impartial staff who are trained to understand and investigate harassment and similar behaviours.

- 3.4 The University will ensure that all students and staff understand their options to report incidents (for example, named or anonymously), the potential limitations of each option, the support available to them and that these arrangements are also in place for offsite activities relating to their studies or employment.

#### 4. Legal duties

- 4.1 There are a range of legal duties which apply in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion including:

- The Equality Act 2010 and its associated Codes of Practice;
- The Human Rights Act 1998;
- The Criminal Justice Public Order Act 1994.

- 4.2 In addition the University is covered by the 'public sector equality duty' (the equality duty) which came into force as part of the Equality Act. As a result we have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
  - (i) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
  - (ii) Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
  - (iii) Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
  - (i) tackle prejudice, and
  - (ii) promote understanding.

- 4.3 In addition there are specific duties under the equality duty. These are:

- (a) To publish annually information to demonstrate our compliance with the equality duty, section 149(1) of the Act.
- (b) This information will include, in particular, information relating to persons who share a relevant protected characteristic who are:

- (i) our employees;
  - (ii) other persons affected by our policies and practices (i.e. students).
- (c) To prepare and publish one or more objectives we think we should achieve in order to satisfy paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1) of section 149 of the Equality Act. (sections 4.2 a-c above).

The objectives will be published at intervals of not greater than four years beginning with the date of the last publication. These objectives can be found in Section 10 of this policy.

- 4.4 To ensure that all staff are fully aware of their legal obligations and responsibilities they are required to take part in equality, diversity and inclusion training. This begins in their induction period and is continued through ongoing refresher training.
- 4.5 In discharging our legal duties we are mindful of our obligations under section 43 of the Education (No.2) Act 1986 to take reasonable measures to protect freedom of lawful speech as detailed in its Code of Practice on Speech and Expression, as well as Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Act), which places a duty on the institution, in the exercise of its functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. We take a proportionate approach through the use of risk assessment to ensure that relevant staff prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and challenge extremist ideas which risk drawing people into terrorism without compromising our other legal obligations.
- 4.6 As part of our responsibilities under the Equality Act, the University may refer to the police any behaviours which it becomes aware of or uncovers that could constitute Hate Crime, Domestic Abuse or breaches of Section 33 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 (“revenge porn”) or Section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 (repeatedly or continuously engaging in controlling or coercive behaviour towards an intimate (or ex) partner).

## 5. Impact assessment and information

- 5.1 To assist in complying with our legal obligations we will consider the impact of our decision making across the protected characteristics. Where there is a potential impact on any one protected characteristic we will assess whether a formal impact assessment is required to establish an action plan to overcome this impact or if this is not possible record the reasons why. The approach is to allow us to deal with our legal obligations in a proportionate way.
- 5.2 To assist in making such decisions and to comply with our legal obligations with regard to HESA returns we will collate equality information on our staff and students.
- 5.3 We will use the information available to us on equality to assist us to:
- identify barriers to access;
  - identify differences in the opportunities available to groups in comparison with others in relation to participation, achievement, progression and learning experience;
  - investigate the reasons for any differences and identify ways in which the gaps can be narrowed.

## 6 Leadership and Governance

- 6.1 The Governors and Senior Management Team (SMT) endorse the commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, their lead is important in supporting staff and students, and in embracing this commitment in everything we do.

- 6.2 To drive forward our commitment, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Student Experience & Resources has been appointed to chair the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee as part of our executive committee structure.
- 6.3 The role and remit of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is defined in its terms of reference.

## 7. The University as an education provider

### 7.1 Admissions

Everything we do in relation to deciding who is admitted to the institution will be non-discriminatory in relation to a protected characteristic. For example, all admissions information and application forms will be available in accessible formats to ensure that we comply with the reasonable adjustments duty to disabled people.

### 7.2 Curriculum Content and Design

Our courses are developed to align with established sector benchmarks. We are not restricted in the range of issues, ideas and materials used across syllabuses and we have the academic freedom to expose students to a range of ideas, however controversial. This includes where the content of the curriculum may cause offence to students with certain protected characteristics. We will however ensure that such content will not be delivered in a way which results in harassment or subjects students to discrimination or other detriment.

We recognise that we must ensure that our courses are taught in a way that will not subject students to discrimination and the way in which the curriculum is taught is crucial to challenging stereotypes and addressing inequality. It is a guiding principal of our Ethics policy that staff should be mindful of legal responsibilities in the Equality Act 2010 and a stated ethical issue that may be recognised in teaching is “the impact of subject matter on individuals or identifiable groups including but not necessarily limited to those groups directly specified in the Equality Act 2010.”

### 7.3 Assessment

Our staff will ensure in making assessment of student work that they do not discriminate against students with protected characteristics. Assuming uniformity in students’ cultural, linguistic, and religious or lifestyle experiences could, for example, result in them indirectly discriminating against students from particular groups.

A competence standard is defined as an academic or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability. It is not a provision, criterion or practice and there is therefore no duty to make reasonable adjustments in relation to the application of a competence standard. However, we recognise that legal duties do apply to the process of demonstrating that a person meets the competence standard. In practical terms this means that the mark required to pass a module or unit would be a competence standard and would not be subject to the duty to make reasonable adjustments for a disabled student. However, we will consider reasonable adjustments to the assessment process for students with disabilities and in order to support how they are able to produce their work.

#### 7.4 Educational Visits

We will seek to ensure that educational visits which are arranged do not discriminate against any students, and where required make reasonable adjustments to enable students with a range of disabilities to access them.

#### 7.5 Qualifications

We will avoid discriminating when awarding, renewing or extending qualifications to students, including any form of authorisation, approval or certification that we make. For example, if a student undergoes gender reassignment during the course of their time with us and notifies us of their change of gender and change of name, the data that records and informs the student's progress and achievement will be amended accordingly.

#### 7.6 Resources

We will provide facilities which are accessible in terms of physical structure (or reasonable adjustments for individuals affected by such accessibility issues), accessible information and hours of service which reflect service usage.

7.7 All facilities and locations will be monitored for the display of offensive literature. Where such material is found it will be removed.

7.8 In addition, to support our students we will:

- ensure our student policies are fit-for-purpose and review them regularly;
- support the Students' Union and other representative forums;
- regularly review our student data and take action where appropriate;
- use a variety of different methods to attract and retain students from all equality backgrounds including those with protected characteristics;
- provide assistive technology and other services for students with particular needs;
- encourage open, honest discussion about issues which support students' educational attainment and a learning culture.

### 8 How to raise a complaint

8.1 Complaints under this policy can be raised informally by staff to their line manager or HR. All students are encouraged to report bullying and harassment or suspected cases to any member of University staff.

8.2 Complaints can be raised formally under the staff or student anti-bullying and harassment policy, and will usually be investigated under the University's disciplinary procedures for either staff or students.

### 9. External relations

9.1 Visitors and representatives from organisations attending our sites on any business will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner which matches our ethos regarding equality, diversity and inclusion. External staff and consultants who we engage will be expected to adhere to the principles of equality of opportunity.

9.2 Organisations providing services will be made aware of our stance on equality, diversity and inclusion. We will use our influence to encourage wider understanding and acceptance of

equal opportunities within the fields of both education and employment through our relationships with our external partners.

## 10. Aims for the future

10.1 To ensure that this policy is implemented, we have developed key overarching objectives and specific objectives for the next 3 years:

- (a) Increase participation of students and staff from protected characteristic groups who would benefit from studying or working at the Institution.
  - (i) *Through* analysing data and information in order to identify barriers to entry; briefing and training staff; enacting an active outreach programme; targeted marketing and promotion.
  - (ii) *Evidenced by* achieving the targets set out in our Access and Participation Plan which includes an increased participation of BAME students to 16% of our undergraduate intake by 2024/25.
- (b) To identify and narrow the gaps in performance between groups with protected characteristics throughout the student lifecycle.
  - (i) *Through* effective use of data in order to identify and implement appropriate strategies that support the continuation, attainment and progression of underrepresented groups.
  - (ii) *Evidenced by* narrowing the gaps identified and achieving the targets set out in our Access and Participation Plan which includes the elimination of the attainment gap that exists between students with a disability and those without from 2021.

## 11. Monitoring, reporting, reviewing and updating

11.1 We will monitor the success of this policy through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which will report on progress to the SMT and through the equality annual statistical report, which Governors will receive.

11.2 The University will review the policy every three years or as changes in the law, government policy or as required by regulators.

## 12. Key contacts

12.1 For information and guidance in relation to equality and diversity please contact:

Graham Curling	Head of HR (Employment Issues)
Professor Dave Russell	Pro-Vice-Chancellor Student Experience & Resources, Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
Katrina Welsh	Head of Student Support