



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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Date: 16 February 2011
Approved by: Corporation
Type: Policy

Revised: January 2012
May 2013
June 2014
January 2017

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Leeds Arts University has a long history of commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. We strive to build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness and transparency for our staff and students. We believe that by embracing equality, diversity and inclusion we are providing a sound foundation on which to build a successful and vibrant institution whose cultures and values are respected by both our students and the community as a whole.
- 1.2 This policy outlines how we will continue to fulfil our statutory duties to promote equality, diversity and inclusion as well as tackling and eliminating discrimination.

2 Scope

- 2.1 The policy is applicable to all staff, students, communities, suppliers and contractors, whether permanent or temporary. The policy applies to all processes relating to employment and training and to any dealings with customers and students
- 2.2 The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidance regarding equality and our overall commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

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 a 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 will ensure that all staff and students are treated with respect and dignity, and work to provide a positive environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation. We will work towards the elimination of prejudice, harassment, bullying and discrimination, whether overt or covert, and will seek to ensure that all staff and students have equal access to the full range of University facilities. Behaviour, actions or words that transgress the policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the University's disciplinary policy for staff or students.
- 3.3 We seek not only to eliminate discrimination, but also to create 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 (including caste)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

4. Legal duties

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

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

This means there will be no discrimination against staff or students unless otherwise justified in law.

4.2 There are further legal requirements within the 'public sector equality duty' (the equality duty) which came into force as part of the Equality Act which apply to us as a provider of Further and Higher Education. 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;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves, in particular, to the need to:

- (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.

Having due regard to the need to 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:

- (a) Tackle prejudice, and
- (b) Promote understanding.

- 4.3 In addition there are specific duties under the the equality duty. These are:-
- (i) To publish annually information to demonstrate our compliance with the equality duty imposed by section 149(1) of the Equality Act not later than 31st January each year.
 - (ii) This information will include, in particular, information relating to persons who share a relevant protected characteristic who are:
 - (a) our employees;
 - (b) other persons affected by our policies and practices (i.e. students or prospective students).
 - (iii) To prepare and publish one or more objectives we thinks 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 must be published at intervals of not greater than four years beginning with the date of last publication.

In compliance with the equality duty these documents will be published in a way which is accessible to the public.

- 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.
- 4.6 In discharging these legal duties we will be 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.

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:
- 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
 - measure the effectiveness of our action plan.
- 5.4 We will seek to improve our information base by:
- improving the quality and accuracy of information in respect of race, disability, gender and age in the staff and student populations,
 - considering information requirements when we conduct impact assessment and monitor subsequent changes.
 - ensuring staff are trained in how information is collected and how to use it.
 - monitoring communications channels so that compliance and inclusiveness are assured.

6 Leadership

- 6.1 The Governors and Senior Management Team endorse the commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and 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 Director of Studies, Progression and Student Support has been appointed to chair the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.
- 6.3 The role and remit of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is defined in its terms of reference.

7. Equality as part of our business cycle

- 7.1 As part of our business planning cycle we will:
- ensure equality is embedded as a mainstream element of our day to day activities.
 - where services are to be procured through tendering, build action for equality into procurement arrangements.
 - give consideration to the impact on equality, diversity and inclusion of our decision making and of the implementation our policies and procedures.
 - collect evidence to monitor compliance, set improvement measures in a proportionate manner and report on progress in achieving these measures.

8. The University as an education provider

8.1 “We are an influential, world-facing, creatively driven institution where professional educators, practitioners and researchers work together to develop and enable excellence. We aim to promote distinctive, critically informed and relevant practice in order to support economic growth and cultural advancement.”

8.2 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.

8.3 Curriculum Content

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.

8.4 Curriculum design

Although the content of courses is not subject to the discrimination provisions, 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.”

8.5 Assessment

It is important that our staff ensure, in making assessments, 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. The University will make all reasonable efforts to try to avoid discriminating indirectly against students in the timing of assessments.

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 of the assessment process for students with disabilities.

8.6 Educational Visits

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

8.7 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.

8.9 Promotional Materials

All material published will seek to avoid the use of offensive and discriminatory language and images. Such marketing materials will be directed at encouraging the widest representation of cultural and social groups to participate. Equally, materials prepared to deliver the curriculum will be free from racist, sexist, and other discriminatory assumptions, images and language, unless they are being studied as examples of such.

8.10 Administration

We respect the wide diversity of the student body and will endeavour to ensure that systems and practices do not conflict with cultural and religious beliefs. Where there is potential for such conflict, staff are encouraged to seek advice and guidance from appropriate managers. Academic advice and guidance will be available to meet diverse needs and to ensure that students are aware of appropriate progression routes.

8.11 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.

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

8.13 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.
- Comply with all equalities-related legislation.
- 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.

9. How we will deal with complaints

- 9.1 It is our aim that most concerns or issues will be raised with and resolved in conjunction with tutors (for students) and line managers (for staff). In addition we have a range of support options available to staff and students, including counselling. However, it is appreciated that resolution through these means is not always possible and that the matter may be of such a nature that it needs to be addressed more formally.
- 9.2 We have procedures in place to consider all complaints, through either informal or formal routes for both staff and students. Where a complaint is made we will address it within the terms of these procedures and will seek to provide a fair, proper and constructive response to complaints within a reasonable timescale. Outcomes of complaints relating to equality and diversity will be publicised where this can be done without breaching personal confidentiality.

10 External relations

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 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.

11. Publications Policy

- 11.1 We will ensure that this policy and accompanying documentation are accessible by publishing them electronically in appropriate formats and making them available on request for example in large print, Braille or appropriate electronic form.

12. Aims for the future

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

Encourage participation of students and staff from underrepresented/protected characteristic groups who would benefit from studying or working at the Institution.

Through enacting an active outreach programme, targeted marketing and promotion

Evidenced by HESA student/staff data, OFFA monitoring report, WP Report

Ensure effective monitoring and reporting of equal opportunities for protected characteristic groups throughout the student lifecycle

Through monitoring equality statistics annually at the ED & I Committee to identify significant anomalies in achievement or progression of different groups

Evidenced by annual staff and student equality, diversity and inclusion report, FE Self-assessment Report, HESA attainment data

13. Monitoring, reporting, reviewing and updating

13.1 We will monitor the success of this policy through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which will report on progress to the SMT and to Governors.

13.2 The University will review the policy every three years taking into account changes in the law, government policy and strategic goals.

14. Key contacts

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

Graham Curling
Dave Russell

Head of HR (Employment Issues)
Pro-Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Resources, Chair of the
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee