

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact the Equality & Diversity Team on 0161 247 6494 or email: equalities@mmu.ac.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Manchester Metropolitan University is proud of its diverse community of students, staff and visitors and is committed to creating a positive environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The University aims to build a culture where:

- Fairness and inclusion are a fundamental part of everything that we do.
- Diversity is valued and celebrated.
- Good relations between diverse members of the University's community are promoted.
- People's diverse abilities and backgrounds are recognised and are treated with respect.
- Students from diverse backgrounds have an equal opportunity to benefit from higher education.
- Students and staff from diverse backgrounds have an equal opportunity to reach their potential.
- Benefits are maximised to the local communities that we serve.

1.2 Principles

This Policy provides a standpoint for the University under the principles of equality for individuals who identify with the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010. This policy exceeds the legislated principles, and will protect individuals from unlawful conduct, because of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment , gender identity and gender expression.¹
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The University will operate a zero tolerance approach in respect of prohibited conduct relating to the list above.

1.3 Purpose

The University will ensure that people are treated equally regardless of their identification with one or more of the protected characteristics, of their

¹ Including those who identify as Trans*, gender non-binary and gender fluid.

socio-economic background, family responsibilities, or other appropriate distinction.

The University will follow codes of practice and guidelines issued by the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC), Government Equalities Office (GEO), Office for Students (OfS) and where appropriate Advance HE (formerly the Equality Challenge Unit).

We will be proactive in all matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. We value and will celebrate the richness brought to our institution by a diverse population of staff, students and partners. We recognise and will seek to reflect the positive contributions brought to the University by the variety of its staff and students.

- 1.4** We will continue to strive to provide an environment in which people want to work and to be a model employer leading in good employment practice. Manchester Metropolitan University is committed to enabling each member of staff to achieve their full potential in an environment characterised by dignity and mutual respect. The University will take a zero tolerance approach to discrimination, victimisation, harassment or any other prohibited conduct of any kind by any party. Any action found to be in breach of any of these would be addressed in accordance with University policies and procedures.
- 1.5** Equality and diversity strengthens all of our work and is at the heart of what we are and what we do.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1** The Policy applies to all employees, prospective employees, students, and visitors, as well as any persons or companies associated with the functions of the University.
- 2.2** The University takes its responsibility to these people seriously and seeks to ensure that they are treated with dignity and respect.
- 2.3** The Policy applies to all areas of student recruitment, selection, and admission. The University's [Admissions Policy](#) is underpinned by principles of fairness, equality of opportunity and access to courses and the range of services.
- 2.4** The Policy applies to all areas of employment including recruitment applications, short-listing, selection, progression, training, reward, benefits, capability and performance, discipline, grievance, absence, conditions of service and reasons for termination of employment.
- 2.5** The University's Equality & Diversity Strategy and its associated action plan support this Policy and set out the activities the University shall undertake to meet and exceed our Statutory Duties.

The activity committed to over the period of the strategy will support us to meet our legal duties, in particular the need to have due regard to:

- i. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct within the Act;
- ii. Advance equality of opportunity between those that share a protected characteristic and those that do not;
- iii. Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

3. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 An Equality & Diversity Policy cannot succeed without the active support of the entire University community. The responsibility for delivering the Policy extends to every member of the organisation including managers, those with an explicit remit for diversity, and individual members of staff. The implementation of this Policy is therefore a shared responsibility amongst staff employed by the University. In addition, key individuals have specific responsibilities as set out below:

3.1.1 Overall responsibility for the Policy will sit with the Vice Chancellor. This includes responsibility for ensuring that the Policy is communicated, implemented, monitored and continuously reviewed according to legislation.

3.1.2 The Governing body will oversee the University's progress with the Policy through regular agenda items at meetings of the Board. An identified member of the Board is responsible for taking the lead on equality and diversity matters.

3.1.3 The Diversity and Equal Opportunities Committee ([DEOC](#)) has a responsibility for ensuring that our aims regarding equality and diversity are met and for fostering a working and learning environment in which all staff and students can fulfil their potential and for driving forward the implementation of the Policy.

3.1.3.1 The [Staff Equality Fora](#)² will support the implementation of the Policy, Equality & Diversity Strategy and action plan. Their role will include consultation and involvement in consulting on University policies through the Equality Impact Assessment ([EIA](#)) process.

3.1.3.2 The Disability Network Group will consider issues pertaining to disabled students. The Network will identify,

² Networks include Disabled, Gender, Race and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Ally Plus (LGBT+).

support and disseminate good practice in relation to the learning and teaching of disabled students with the aim of developing an inclusive learning environment. Issues which need to be clarified at University level will be brought to DEOC.

- 3.1.4** The Assistant Director of HR: People and Organisational Development will ensure that staff and managers are aware of their responsibilities under this Policy and provide appropriate training and support to enable them to fulfil them.
- 3.1.5** Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors, Directorate Heads, Heads of Department, managers and supervisors are responsible for promoting equality and diversity to students and staff. Additionally, line managers are responsible for ensuring that staff identified as having specific responsibilities engage with the Policy and carry out actions arising from the Equality & Diversity Strategy and its associated action plan.
- 3.1.6** The Equality & Diversity Champions, through their work within their Faculty/Division will support the mainstreaming of equality and diversity to embed it into institutional processes and integrating it into the core values of the University.
- 3.1.7** The Director of Finance will have responsibility for putting in place rigorous procurement systems for ensuring all contractors and tendering organisations comply with the University's Equality & Diversity Policy.
- 3.1.8** Trade Unions will provide advice, support and representation for their members and engage with the University to promote equal opportunities, prevent unlawful discrimination and help to foster good relations.
- 3.1.9** Student Union representatives will receive feedback from students and raise any issues. The Union will also keep in regular contact with all the course representatives so that any feedback that they have can be given to the appropriate department/committee in the University.
- 3.1.10** All members of staff, students, external partners, service providers and suppliers in the University are expected to comply with the Policy to ensure fair, equal and appropriate treatment in all aspects of work and study.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1** The Assistant Director of HR: People and Organisational Development is responsible for the overall implementation and monitoring of the Policy

through the Strategy actions and will provide progress reports on an annual basis. The Equality and Diversity Team will provide support to those responsible for delivering specific actions.

- 4.2** All students should be provided with information about the Policy on registration and abide by its principles.
- 4.3** All employees should familiarise themselves with this Policy and ensure their practices are consistent with its contents and legislation.
- 4.4** New employees must receive information on Equality & Diversity obligations and provisions from their managers at an early stage in their employment. The University Welcome Programme includes an opportunity to access Equality & Diversity resources and meet with members of the Equality & Diversity team.
- 4.5** A mandatory on-line Equality and Diversity awareness training package must be completed by all staff. Line managers are responsible for ensuring the training is undertaken and completion will be monitored by POD. A continuing programme of equality and diversity training is provided to all staff.
- 4.6** Individual members of staff should inform their line manager, their HR Advisor and/or trade union representative if they think that discrimination is taking place.
- 4.7** In order to ensure their effectiveness, all University policies and procedures will be monitored and reviewed through undergoing an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for which the University provides EIA guidance, training, and support.

5. COMMUNICATION

- 5.1** It is important that employees at all levels are aware of this Policy in order to comply with its requirements. A copy is available on the intranet and copies will be made available to staff who have limited access to a computer.
- 5.2** The Policy will be published online and made available in hard copy and alternative formats upon request.
- 5.3** An Annual Report will be made available on the progress of the Equality & Diversity Strategy Objectives and will be published on the University website and Intranet (it will be made available to members of the public on request). The report will include specific measures adopted to promote equal opportunities, progress on developments, and the outcome of the relevant year's monitoring of statistics, EIAs and future priorities.

6. COMPLAINTS

- 6.1 The University will take seriously any instances of non-adherence to the Equality and Diversity Policy by employees, prospective employees, students, and visitors, as well as any persons or companies associated with the functions of the University. The University will ensure that all staff and students are given opportunities to pursue reasonable means to follow procedures should they feel they are experiencing discrimination. Complaints of discrimination because of the areas covered by this Policy should be brought using the appropriate Grievance Procedures for staff and students.
- 6.2 Any instances of non-adherence will be investigated and where appropriate will be considered under the relevant disciplinary Policy for staff or students. With regard to any breach of the Policy by visitors or any persons or companies associated with the functions of the University, the University will take appropriate action in relation to the nature of the incident.
- 6.3 Any student who wishes to raise a complaint will be referred through the [Student Complaints Procedure](#).
- 6.4 Any applicant for employment concerned about the application of the Policy should contact the Resourcing Manager in the Human Resources Department.