

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

1.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

The London Interdisciplinary School is a new alternative provider delivering a single programme focused on Interdisciplinarity. It is based in London and has the long-term goal of recruiting a staff and student body that is representative of the population in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic status, and disability. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and our associated policies and plans, including our [Disability Policy](#), our [Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedure](#), and our Access and Participation Plan, are central to this aim.

Overview

The School is committed to creating and sustaining a positive and supportive working environment and studying environment for its staff and students, where staff and student are equally valued and respected. We value the diversity of our staff and students and are committed to creating an inclusive culture. This is reflected in, and supported by, our vision and strategy, in our access and participation activities, our student conduct policy, admission and assessment procedures, our disability provision, and our employment policies and procedures. This Policy describes the School's equality, diversity and inclusion policy, including scope, principles and policies, and roles and responsibilities.

Legislative context

Under the [Equality Act 2010](#), the School has a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all staff and students of the School, as well as contractors. The principles of non-discrimination, equality of opportunity and good relations apply to the way in which staff and students should treat each other, applicants, visitors, contractors, service providers, suppliers, former staff and students, and any other persons associated with the functions of the School.

Development of this Policy

This policy has been developed in line with the legislative context, best practice guidelines (e.g., ACAS, CIPD, Advance HE, Universities UK, HE Academy), and in consultation with School staff. When we have students enrolled in our programme, we will consult them on this policy so that we can evolve it in line with their feedback.

Principles and Policies

We believe that diversity is our strength, and that excellence across all of our activities will be only achieved through recognising the value of every individual. We aim to create an inclusive environment that respects the diversity of our staff and students, and enables them to achieve their full potential, to contribute fully, and to derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the School. To this end, we will:

- Seek to ensure that all individuals are treated equitably, regardless of gender, race or ethnicity, socio-economic background, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, age, or any other inappropriate distinction.
- Comply with all legal obligations relating to equality and diversity.
- Ensure that consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded into all of the School's strategic, planning and policy decision-making. In practice, this will involve the completion of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) when creating or withdrawing policies, practices, procedures or services. The School's Equality Impact Assessment Guidance gives further details on the use and development of EIAs at the School.
- Promote diversity of student recruitment and eliminate bias of any kind, through our outreach and schools attainment and support activities, through our merit-based, contextual admissions process, and by monitoring our progress against our access targets and making changes to our activities and processes where appropriate.
- Promote equality of opportunity in student attainment, by: monitoring individual student progress and outcomes, taking into account contextual information, determining where there are inequalities of opportunity, and making interventions to address these; deploying a variety of student learning and personal support services; through our disability provision; and providing financial support to those students most in need.
- Promote diversity in our staff body by seeking to eliminate bias in our employment and performance management procedures.
- Promote an inclusive teaching and learning environment, where all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, and are given equal opportunities to fulfil their potential.
- Have in place an effective data monitoring and analysis process that supports this policy.
- Ensure that managers and staff undergo appropriate equality training for their role, and that students are given information and training on our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy at induction.

- Involve staff, students and other stakeholders in the development and delivery of the School's equality objectives.
- Ensure that all contractors and service providers to the School are made aware of this policy and the School's expectation that they adhere to it.

All members of the School, including staff, students and contractors, share responsibility for the successful implementation of its equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Members of staff who are professionally involved in staff and student support recruitment, support, development and supervision have a particular responsibility to embed the principles of this Policy in all of their activities.

The School is committed to ensuring that all staff and students have equal access to the full range of institutional facilities, and that adjustments to working and learning practices are considered wherever reasonably possible, in order to accommodate more diverse community. The School's [Disability Policy](#) sets out the School's provision for disabled staff, students, applicants and visitors.

Any staff member or student who believes that they have been the victim of discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimization has the full right of protection under the School's [Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedure](#). Any student or member of staff found to have unlawfully discriminated against or harassed an applicant, visitor, contractor, staff member or student will be subject to disciplinary action, including, where appropriate, dismissal for gross misconduct. Individuals who complain of discrimination have the right to do so without fear of victimization, and the School will make every effort to ensure this does not occur.

Equality Objectives

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies are broad-ranging and underpin the way we work across every core function of the School. In addition to these policies, the School has a set of specific equality objectives, which are:

- To move towards student body that is representative of the general population in terms of black and minority ethnic students, disabled students, students from deprived and lower socio-economic status backgrounds;
- To increase the diversity of our staff in relation to black and minority ethnic staff, disabled staff, and staff from lower socio-economic backgrounds;
- To close the gaps in degree success and progression outcomes between different equality groups;
- To foster good relations between different equality groups and challenge discrimination;
- To ensure that our School actively promotes the equality and inclusion of staff and students of different genders and sexualities, including those with gender reassignment.

Access and Participation Plan

The School's Access and Participation Plan sets out strategic objectives and targets relating to the widening of participation in HE of underrepresented groups. It has been developed in alignment with the School's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and specific equality objectives. Our Access and Participation objectives are to actively enable and support diversity in our student body, and to ensure that all students have equal opportunity and the necessary support to succeed at LIS and progress to professional employment or further study.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Directors has ultimate accountability for compliance with the School's equality obligations. It will monitor the School's annual performance against its equality, diversity and inclusion objectives, and will determine any necessary changes to the School's management, operational, and strategic activities, or to its supporting policies and procedures.

[The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee](#), which is a subcommittee of the Academic Council, has overall formal responsibility for this Policy, and for its implementation. The Committee is also responsible for:

- Considering all existing and emerging equality legislation, with a view to identifying relevant issues and responding to these within the School's policy.
- Monitoring, analysing and reporting to the Academic Council and the Board on data relating to equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Producing the annual Equality Report;
- Monitoring the School's performance against the delivery of its equality objectives through student and staff data and feedback, and recommending changes to the Academic Council where improvements are required;
- Evaluating and monitoring the School's performance against its Access and Participation Plan, and recommending changes where improvements are required, reporting on a termly basis to the Academic Council;
- Designing and delivering training and campaigns for awareness relating to equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Providing advice, support and guidance to managers, staff and students on diversity and equality issues;
- Considering staff and student feedback on the School's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, [Disability Policy](#) and the [Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedure](#), as well as feedback on any other equality, diversity and inclusion issues as collated by the Director of Admissions and Student Support, and recommending changes as appropriate to the Board of Directors.

The Membership and Terms of Reference of the Committee are set out in [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee: Membership and Terms of Reference](#).

The Director of Admissions and Student Support is responsible for receiving and commissioning feedback from staff and students on the School's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, its [Disability Policy](#) and its [Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedure](#),

and bringing this feedback to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group for review and determination.

Managers and teaching staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they give due consideration to equality and diversity in the conduct of the affairs within their spheres;
- Setting a good example to their staff and students by treating others with equal dignity and respect;
- Challenging and correcting any inappropriate behaviour or discrimination;
- Ensuring that their staff and students know how to report bullying, harassment, intimidation or discrimination (with reference to the [Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedure](#)) and ensuring that they are not victimised if they do so.

All staff, students and contractors (“members” of the School) are responsible for:

- Being mindful of this policy and the related [Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedure](#)
- Challenging any inappropriate behaviour or discrimination;
- Reporting inappropriate behaviour or discrimination in accordance with the [Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedure](#).

Complaints and Feedback about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policies

Where a member of staff, student or prospective student has a complaint or feedback about the School’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, its [Disability Policy](#) or its [Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedure](#), or on any issue relating to equality, diversity and inclusion at the School, they should contact the Director of Admissions and Student Support in writing (by letter or email) at their earliest convenience, setting out:

- The nature of their complaint, feedback or issue;
- The action, mitigation or changes they expect to see.

The Director of Admissions and Student Support can be contacted by email at studentsupport@t-lis.org or by post at:

Director of Admissions and Student Support
The London Interdisciplinary School
X + Why
20-30 Whitechapel Road
London
E1 1EW
United Kingdom.

The Director of Admissions and Student Support will acknowledge receipt of the complaint, feedback or issue within five working days.

The Director of Admissions and Student Support may seek further information from the individual who has submitted a complaint or feedback, and will conduct an investigation to determine further information relating to the complaint, feedback or issue.

Where the complaint or issue relates to a specific individual or group of individuals, the complainant will be advised to continue their complaint under the [Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedure](#).

Having investigated the complaint, feedback or issue, the Director of Admissions and Student Support will table it for discussion at a specially convened meeting of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The Committee will determine:

- a) Whether the complaint, issue or feedback is upheld given the information collated by the Director of Admissions and Student Support;
- b) Whether further information is required on the complaint, issue or feedback to come to a view. In this case the Director of Admissions and Student Support or their nominee will gather the required information and the Committee will be reconvened at the earliest opportunity.
- c) Actions to address the complaint, issue or feedback. Where actions include a policy change, the Committee will recommend changes to the Board of Directors for sign-off.

The Director of Admissions and Student Support will give the Committee's response to the individual who brought the complaint/feedback/issue to the School's attention within twenty working days of the raising of the complaint/feedback/issue. Should the individual be dissatisfied with the Committee's response, they have a right of appeal to the Chief Executive.

The individual must submit their appeal in writing (by email or letter) to the Chief Executive within 10 working days of the notification of the Committee's response. The Chief Executive will review the appeal and notify the individual of the outcome within 25 working days of receiving it. The outcome may be:

- To confirm the response of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee; or
- To revise the response to the complaint, feedback or issue. Where this response entails a change to policy, the Chief Executive will recommend the required changes at the next Board of Directors meeting; or
- To order a new investigation by the Director of Admissions and Student Support and a reconvening of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee on the matter.

Monitoring and Review

This policy and its effectiveness will be reviewed annually by Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and any changes authorised by the Board of Directors, and may be amended from time to time to reflect any changes to relevant legislation, or to respond to complaints, feedback or issues raised by staff or students.

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Related documents: (e.g. associated forms, underpinning processes, related policies or overarching policies)	Code of Ethical Conduct Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy Dignity at Study and Work Policy and Procedure Disability Policy Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee: Membership and Terms of Reference

Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Brief summary of changes
1	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions and Student Support)	13/01/2019	Original draft
2	Jasper Joyce (Director of Finance and Operations)	13/03/2019	Adjustments to wording
3	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions and Student Support)	03/06/2019	Inclusion of brief introduction on the type of institution LIS is. Elaboration of the School's equality objectives beyond those of the Equality Act 2010, and the reasons for them. How complaints and feedback about Equality and Diversity are handled (timeframe, responsibility). Consultation with internal and external stakeholders in development of EDI policy. Inclusion of reference to Access and Participation Plan and links to EDI
4	Executive Committee	08/08/2019	Approved
5	Board of Directors	18/11/2019	Approved

