

Equality and diversity policy

Purpose

Walbrook is committed to creating a culture in which diversity and equality of opportunity are promoted and in which discrimination is not tolerated. The organisation recognises the real educational and business benefits of having a diverse community of employees, students / apprentices, members, and subscribers to our services, and works towards building and maintaining an environment which values such diversity.

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all of our employees, students / apprentices, members, subscribers, and visitors, together with those contracted on a self-employed basis to provide services for the organisation. Where required there are supplementary policies / procedures to this general policy statement.

Policy statement

We aim to ensure that

- individuals are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and skills
- nobody is discriminated against on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- it affords its students, members, subscribers, and employees the opportunity to fulfil their potential
- it promotes a supportive environment for employees, students, subscribers, and visitors.

Policy commitments

The organisation is opposed to all forms of discrimination. Useful definitions in relation to equality and diversity can be found in Appendix 1.

The organisation commits to

- create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all team members are recognised and valued
- create a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for every employee
- reflect as far as possible the diversity of talent, experience, and skills available from the local, national, and international pool from which it draws its students and workforce
- not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and to discipline those that breach this policy
- make training, development, and progression opportunities available to all staff

- promote equality in the workplace, which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- encourage anyone who feels they've been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns
- encourage employees to treat everyone with dignity and respect
- regularly review all our employment practices and procedures so that fairness is maintained at all times.

Implementation of the policy

The successful implementation of this policy relies on integrating equality and diversity issues into all aspects of the organisation's operations.

Roles and responsibilities

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring the organisation meets its legal obligations in respect of legislation relating to equalities.

Chief Executive Officer and the Senior Management Team

The Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team are responsible for the implementation of our equality and diversity policy and to ensure that rectifying actions are undertaken where appropriate.

Human Resources

Human Resources (HR), in conjunction with the directorates, is responsible for ensuring that procedures relating to employee recruitment, selection, development, discipline, and grievance are carried out in accordance with the equality and diversity policy.

To support this, the HR department is responsible for providing advice, guidance, and support on the application of this policy, and for developing action plans in conjunction with other colleagues to address any alleged inequalities in employment practices.

The HR department will provide appropriate training to enable both the understanding and the practice of the equality and diversity policy.

Directorates

The directorates are responsible for ensuring that all policies and practices relating to students and employees are carried out in accordance with the equality and diversity policy.

Managers

Managers are responsible for

- fostering a culture in which compliance with this policy is regarded as integral to the work of their departments
- ensuring that they and their teams comply with this policy.

Employees, students / apprentices, members, and subscribers

Employees, students / apprentices, members, and subscribers are responsible for

- supporting the aims of this policy
- contributing to building an environment free of fear or intimidation
- ensuring that their behaviour and actions do not amount to discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation in any way
- informing visitors and / or colleagues if their behaviour is not in line with the organisation's equality and diversity policy.

Breach of the policy

We'll take seriously any instances of alleged non-adherence to the equality and diversity policy.

Employees who wish to make a complaint of discrimination or harassment should report it to the HR department or submit a 'Respect at Walbrook' reporting form which can be found [here](#).

Students, subscribers, visitors or members wishing to make a complaint of discrimination or harassment should address their complaint to the department providing the service.

Any instances of alleged non-adherence will be investigated, and where appropriate will be considered under the relevant disciplinary policy for staff, students, members, and subscribers.

Any instances of alleged non-adherence that fall within the remit of the Prevent Duty will be reported to the relevant Managing Director / Dean who'll appoint an appropriate person to investigate and document.

With regard to any breach of the policy by visitors, the organisation will take appropriate action in relation to the nature of the incident.

Monitoring and review

The HR department will monitor and review the organisation's performance in relation to employee matters on equality and diversity and report their findings to the Senior Management team. The relevant academic committee will monitor and review the organisation's performance on equality and diversity in educational matters.

The policy will be reviewed every three years or more frequently if required by changes in legislation.

Relevant legislation

We'll implement this policy in accordance with relevant legislation and codes of practice.

Other relevant documents

This policy is underpinned by a number of institutional policies and procedures within which diversity and equality are embedded e.g., Code of Practice, recruitment and selection, respect at work, harassment and sexual misconduct.

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Updated: October 2022

Appendix 1

Definitions

Direct discrimination occurs when factors unrelated to the merit, ability or potential of a person or group of people are used as an explicit reason for discriminating against them.

Discrimination based on association is a form of direct discrimination which occurs when an individual is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination based on perception is a form of direct discrimination which occurs when an individual is treated less favourably because it's mistakenly thought that they have a protected characteristic.

Discrimination because of pregnancy or maternity occurs when a woman is treated less favourably because she is, or has been pregnant, has given birth in the last 26 weeks or is breastfeeding a baby who is 26 weeks or younger or a child more than 26 weeks old.

Indirect discrimination occurs when there are rules, regulations or procedures in place that have a discriminatory effect on group of people with a protected characteristic and the employer can't show that it's a proportionate means to achieving a legitimate aim.

Discrimination arising from a disability occurs when a disabled person is treated less favourably because of something connected with their disability. This can only

occur if it's known that a person has a disability or it can be reasonably expected that a person is disabled.

Institutional discrimination is defined as the collective failure of an organisation to provide a professional and appropriate service to people because of who they are.

Bullying can be defined as actions, criticism or personal abuse, either in public or private, that humiliates, denigrates, undermines, intimidates or injures the recipient.

Harassment is unwanted conduct that may create the effect (intentionally or unintentionally) of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment which interferes with an individual's learning, working or social environment or induces stress, anxiety, fear or sickness on the part of the harassed person.

Victimisation is punishing or treating an individual unfairly because they've made a complaint, or are believed to have made a complaint, or to have supported someone who has made a complaint. It's unlawful, as is post-employment victimisation.

Reasonable adjustments are a statutory duty in the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments have to be made to both working practices and the working environment to ensure disabled people aren't disadvantaged in comparison to someone who doesn't have a disability.

Equal access is providing equality of opportunity to access services or development.

Employees includes all those employed on a contract of employment.

Contractors include those contracted on a self-employed or limited company basis.