

Equality & Diversity Policy for Learners

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Issue: 8.1

Issue Date: January 2021

Review Date: January 2022



SIRM is committed to providing a high quality environment for employment, research and study and to ensuring the wellbeing of our staff and students. Our institutional values of freedom of expression and freedom of thought are underpinned by the principles of mutual respect and inclusivity, as well as celebration of diversity.

This Equality & Diversity supports SIRM's aspiration to be a respected higher education institution. We aim for high quality in all that we do, and to create a culture in which staff and students can be authentic and thrive. Our belief is that difference is welcome and embraced.

Our aim is to build our staffing and ensure that our employment practices seek to ensure appropriate representation of women across all grades and types of roles.

We will ensure that we maintain data to help us to find ways to ensure inclusivity across colleagues. All staff has a requirement to complete Equality & Diversity training, and we will introduce resources for harassment and unconscious bias. The staff salaries will be reviewed to undertake and publish regular Equal Pay Reports, to ensure no pay gap emerges.

SIRM is concerned to tackle gender and ethnicity attainment gaps so that all students have equal opportunity to succeed. These activities show how we put into practice the aim to redress inequality and disadvantage. And seek positive change to both culture and practice. This E&D Strategy outlines our vision of how we plan to do this, taking forward this important work over the next five years.

Purpose

The Equality & Diversity Policy builds on foundations of institutional policy and resource commitment, legal compliance, specific objectives and senior engagement secured.

This E&D Strategy outlines an operational framework within which objectives are identified, addressed and implemented. Progress against milestones will be closely tracked at a senior level and reported to staff meetings and the School Advisory Board, relevant governance bodies, maximising opportunities for robust consideration of issues and their potential solutions. They add to SIRM's core activities of promoting equality and diversity, developing best inclusive practice, and maintaining compliance with equalities legislation.

Introduction

SIRM is committed to a policy of equality and diversity which promotes and ensures just and fair treatment for all. The aim is to create and maintain a positive working and learning environment which creates mutual respect and dignity and enables everyone to realise their full potential, regardless of age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, political or trade union activity, unrelated criminal convictions.

Aims

SIRM is committed to promoting and achieving equality of opportunity for all learners. We believe that all people are of equal value and are entitled to equality of opportunity irrespective of ability, disability, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, age, social class, appearance or sexual orientation.

Values, principles and standards

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to good practice in learning, in which fairness of opportunity for all is a basic right. This policy is therefore underpinned by the following values, principles and standards:

- equality and social justice
- acknowledging and valuing diversity
- respect for others

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- compliance with equal opportunities legislation
- elimination of all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination
- active challenge to stereotypes, prejudiced attitudes and unfair discriminatory behaviour
- commitment to inclusive education which enables and supports all students to develop their full potential
- accountability for compliance with this policy by all members of the company

Objectives

The objectives of this Equality and Diversity Policy are to:

- i. develop an ethos which respects and values all people
- ii. actively promote equality of opportunity
- iii. prepare learners for life in a diverse society
- iv. promote good relations amongst people within the wider communities within which we work
- v. eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination, bullying, harassment or other oppressive behaviour
- vi. deliver equality and diversity through our policies, procedures and practice
- vii. do our utmost, within available resources, to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to our provision and activities
- viii. take positive action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by stereotyping and cultural expectations
- ix. monitor the implementation of equality and diversity within the company

Communication of Equality and Diversity Policy

We will take active steps to communicate this Equality and Diversity Policy to all learners, staff, partners, stakeholders, contractors and visitors to the company.

Responsibilities and accountabilities

The Board of Directors are responsible for:

- making sure the company follows all of its equality and diversity policies and codes, and meets its legal responsibilities with respect to equality
- giving a consistent and high-profile lead on equality and diversity
- promoting equality and diversity inside and outside the company
- ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with all equality legislation
- making sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out

All staff are responsible for:

- putting the company's equality and diversity policies and codes into practice
- following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying
- promoting equality and diversity, and avoiding unfair discrimination
- creating a learning environment which fosters an atmosphere of openness and acceptance of a variety of views, perceptions and experiences
- challenging all forms of prejudice, discrimination and stereotypical attitudes and behaviours within the learning environment
- wherever possible, providing learning materials and resources which reflect the diverse society in which we live
- wherever possible, ensuring adequate physical access to the learning environment
- ensuring that individuals who have an identified support need are provided with appropriate learning support
- provide courses which can be delivered at a range of levels, by a variety of delivery methods (e.g. distance learning, e-learning, flexible learning, etc.) and at a variety of locations

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Monitoring and review

This Policy will be reviewed annually and at other times as necessary to, for example, incorporate legislative changes.