



Fairfield School of Business

Equality and Diversity Policy

Version 3.9

Approved by Board of Governors

Last Amendment: October 2020

This policy sets out the School's commitment to promoting equal opportunities for all students, employees and other individuals or groups with whom it deals.

This policy has been created with due regard for the Equality Act (2010); Further information on themes of equality and the 'Protected Characteristics' defined within the act can be found on the Equality and Human Rights Commission's website:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Fairfield School of Business (FSB) is committed to providing equality of opportunities and to maintaining inclusive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture, and values diversity.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all members of staff and students, visitors, contractors, sub-contractors, service providers, and any other persons associated with the functions of the School.

Procurement

- 2.2. The School's Head of Operations has rigorous systems in place for ensuring all contractors and tendering organisations comply with our Equality and Diversity Policy.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1. The School will strive to investigate complaints under this policy in line with best practice. We are committed to providing equality for all irrespective of:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality)
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

Under the Equality Act (2010) these are known as 'protected characteristics'.

- 3.2. The School recognises that members of staff and students may have a range of aspirations and goals and wishes to provide a positive working and learning environment where diverse skills and experiences are applied to learning and teaching, support services, research, consultancy, administration and management.



- 3.3. All staff and students should have equal access to the full range of institutional facilities and adjustments to working and learning practices are considered wherever appropriate in order to accommodate a more diverse School community.
- 3.4. An Equality and Diversity Policy cannot succeed without the active support of the entire School community. The FSB Board has ultimate responsibility, managers have direct day-to-day responsibility, and all members of staff and students have personal responsibility for its implementation, as outlined below.
- 3.5. Equality and Diversity are integral to policy formulation, planning and projects and programmes.
- 3.6. The School aims to foster an environment where freedom of expression and debate flourish within the parameters laid down by the School freedom of Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Policy.
- 3.7. This policy takes account of the following legislation:
- *The Equality Act (2010) and associated secondary legislation*
 - *Criminal Justice and Immigration Act (2008)*
 - *The Racial and Religious Hatred Act (2006)*
 - *The Civil Partnership Act (2004)*
 - *The Gender Recognition Act (2004)*
 - *Criminal Justice Act (2003)*
 - *The Human Rights Act (1998)*
 - *The Protection from Harassment Act (1997)*
 - *Special Education Needs and Disability Act (2001)*

4. Discrimination

4.1. Avoiding discrimination

Any staff member, job applicant, student and prospective student, or visitor who believes that he/she may have been the victim of discrimination, harassment or victimisation shall have full right of protection under the Equality Act 2010 and the School's Student Complaint or Staff Grievance Procedures.

Any cases of harassment, discrimination, bullying or victimisation will be taken very seriously by the School. Any member of staff or students found guilty of unlawful discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, including where appropriate, dismissal for gross misconduct.



i. **Age**

The School will not discriminate against any staff member, job applicant, student, or prospective student because of age, or perceived age. The School will not use age, age-related criteria or age ranges in any recruitment and publicity material or internal and external advertisements, unless it is to take positive action. All staff members will have equal rights to training, promotion and other aspects of career development. Age will not be used to justify a failure to promote or train a member of staff.

ii. **Disability**

The School will not discriminate against members of staff, students, job applicants, prospective students, or visitors because of a disability, or perceived disability. The School welcomes applications from people with disabilities, values the contribution of existing staff and students with disabilities, and will treat staff and students fairly should they become disabled. The School will make every effort to facilitate reasonable adjustment to enable staff to carry out their roles. The School is committed to support and enable students with disabilities, impairments or learning difficulties to take part in all aspects of the School's academic and social programmes.

iii. **Gender Reassignment**

The School will not discriminate against anyone because they have changed, or are undergoing a change of sex (transsexual) and will support students and staff for whom gender reassignment grounds apply.

iv. **Race**

The School does not accept any form of racial discrimination against any staff member, job applicant, student, or prospective student because of their race or perceived race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national background, or religious beliefs.

All members of the School community have a duty to make sure that their working and learning environment is free from prejudice and victimisation.

v. **Sex**

The School will not treat any staff member, job applicant, student, or prospective student less favourably because of their gender or gender identification.



vi. **Sexual orientation**

The School recognises that many lesbian, gay and bi-sexual people perceive and sometimes experience exclusion in social, academic and work-related activities, and it will continue to work towards an environment when all people feel able to be open, should they choose, about their sexuality.

vii. **Religion or beliefs**

The School will not discriminate against any staff member, job applicant, student, or prospective student because of cultural or religious beliefs or perceived beliefs. All members of the School are expected to take account of the rights and reasonable sensitivities of others in pursuing their own observance.

viii. **Type of Contract**

The School recognises its responsibilities under the Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Directive 2000 and Fixed-Term Work Directive 2002 to ensure that Part-Time and Fixed-Term workers are in no less favourable position than staff with permanent and/or full time contracts.

5. Students

Admissions

- 5.1. Recruitment and all other marketing literature shall include a reference to the School's Equality and Diversity Policy. All recruitment literature shall use appropriate language and shall Prospective students shall be given realistic guidance on the costs they can expect to pay and of the financial support arrangements available to them.
- 5.2. The School shall select its students in accordance with its Admission Policy.
- 5.3. The School shall take steps to ensure that academic, admissions staff and tutors are aware of and conform to the School's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 5.4. The procedures followed during the process of admissions and clearing shall be regularly reviewed and if necessary revised to minimise the risk of inadvertent discrimination.
- 5.5. The School will monitor and regularly review its policies and procedures to ensure that they continue to support the School's mission and strategic objectives, that they remain current and valid in the light of changing circumstances and that they meet all external requirements, including adherence to equalities legislation. If there is any indication that



members of one group have received less favourable treatment than members of another group, the situations shall be investigated and appropriate action taken in accordance with any relevant approved documentation.

- 5.6. Where an applicant has reason to believe that their application has not been handled fairly, objectively or in accordance with the procedures described above and/or in the Admissions Policy, the applicant should write to the School Admissions Manager setting out their reasons.

Curriculum

- 5.7. The School recognises the importance of the development of the individual through the educational process and the role of the curriculum in ensuring that this development is fulfilled.
- 5.8. The School is therefore committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity with respect to programme content, approaches to teaching and learning, assessment methods and the structure and timetabling of courses of study. Further, it shall aim to ensure that documents such as module study guides and programme handbooks, teaching materials and assessments reflect the aims of this Policy and are available in alternative formats.
- 5.9. The School shall aim to offer a portfolio of provision which is of relevance and interest to persons of all genders and from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds and which are accessible.
- 5.10. The School will encourage perspectives which reflect the cultural diversity of our society and which are neither gender dominated nor ethnocentric.
- 5.11. The School will promote equality of opportunities through the processes of validation and monitoring the use of a range of teaching approaches as well as assessment methods.

Teaching

- 5.12. All staff and students of the School shall use language which is appropriate and is not gratuitously chosen in order to cause offence to particular groups, in the course of teaching and learning and in support of teaching and learning. However, it is fundamental principle of academic freedom that reasoned argument may be employed to test and challenge views, opinions and assertions of all kinds, and in no circumstances may this clause be used to discourage or prevent the exercise of that freedom.



Assessment

- 5.13. The School's objective is to provide a fair method of assessment to ensure equality of opportunity for all of its students.
- 5.14. Appropriate and flexible arrangements shall be made for students with known disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties in the assessment and examination process. Invigilators of examinations shall also be aware of this policy and shall be expected to act in accordance with it. The validity of examinations and assessments shall not be affected by any such arrangements.
- 5.15. The School expects all external examiners to act in accordance with this policy.

Services and Facilities

- 5.16. The School is committed to access by all of its students in groups or as individuals to the central services it provides and the facilities it offers.
- 5.17. All central services within the School which offer services directly to individual students shall monitor the impact of the delivery of their services.
- 5.18. The School's catering services aim to take account, as far as is practicable, of the cultural, religious and dietary needs of all students in the provision of meals.
- 5.19. Recreational opportunities shall be kept under regular review to ensure that the provision does not disadvantage any particular groups of students.

Health and Safety

- 5.20. The School aims to provide its students with a healthy and safe environment in which to study and live. Detailed policies are available and it is the duty of all students to familiarise themselves with those and comply with the relevant requirements. The enforcement of reasonable health and safety requirements shall not constitute discrimination.
- 5.21. The School shall make every effort to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that all parts of the School are accessible and safe.



Code of Conduct

- 5.22. The School's procedures shall be kept under review to ensure currency.

Training

- 5.23. All School staff normally having contact with students shall be made aware of this Policy which shall be supplemented by basic training appropriate to their role in the School.
- 5.24. Specific advice and training shall be given to Academic staff in relation to recruitment and selection, assessment, tutoring and student disciplinary matters.

Harassment and Bullying

- 5.25. Allegations of harassment and bullying are regarded extremely seriously and may be grounds for disciplinary action, in accordance with the School's policy and procedure.

6. Staff Recruitment and Selection

Advertisements

- 6.1. The School will advertise posts outlining the relevant skills, qualifications, knowledge, competencies, and experience necessary for the job in order to attract the best applicants, unless it is to take positive action to welcome applications from groups which do not usually apply, or are underrepresented in the workforce or in the grade being advertised.
- 6.2. When positive action is appropriate and in response to meeting the needs of a particular group who may be under-represented, the School will consider placing advertisements in appropriate publications.
- 6.3. Any external recruitment provider will be vetted and used only if its practices are compliant with the School's policies regarding equality and diversity

Short listing and Interviews

- 6.4. The School will produce a shortlist of job applicants who, from the evidence available, appear to have the necessary skills and abilities in relation to criteria stipulated in the job description/person specification.
- 6.5. The School will ensure that all staff members who are involved in short-listing or in interviewing job applicants or involved in other selection processes, are trained in line with



the School's policies on equality and diversity, and act within them.

- 6.6. The School will monitor job applications, short listing, interviewees and appointments, for both permanent and temporary positions, with regards to age, ethnic origin, disability, gender. If monitoring reveals evidence of any form of discrimination, remedial action will be taken to redress it.
- 6.7. The needs of applicants with disabilities are taken into account during the recruitment and selection process. The HR Officer will advise those interviewing a candidate for a position within the School on the necessary arrangements for disabled applicants to compete on a fair and equal basis.

7. Employment

Equal pay

- 7.1. The School supports the principle of equality of opportunity in employment and believes that staff should receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value, regardless of gender (including staff who have undergone gender re-assignment).

Job descriptions

- 7.2. All staff members have a job description, which outlines the main duties of their role within the School. If an employee changes roles during their employment they will be given a job description for their new role.

Appraisals

- 7.3. The School operates an annual performance review process in which all members of staff are encouraged to participate. Managers will use this process to give feedback to individuals and provide clear guidance on their area of work.

Training, development and promotion

- 7.4. All members of staff are encouraged to take part in staff development. Development opportunities are communicated by a variety of means across the School but the appraisal process provides a regular opportunity to agree development activities and review progress.



Work-life balance

- 7.5. The School recognises, accepts and values staff members' different needs including care responsibilities and personal development.

8. Confidentiality

- 8.1. The School will protect the confidentiality of any equal opportunities monitoring data on staff or students, and will safeguard any information disclosed voluntarily within the regulations set by the *Data Protection Act 2018* and the GDPR. The information will be used for statistical purposes only and the School will safeguard the confidentiality of personal information disclosed.

9. Responsibilities for Implementing the Policy

Members of Staff

- 9.1. All members of staff have the responsibility to comply with this Policy and co-operate with their Line Managers treat others with respect at all times actively discourage discriminatory behaviour/practice in training and wider learning opportunities to eliminate prejudice and extend good practice.

Students

- 9.2. All students are expected to be aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy and to abide by its principles. In particular they should:
- treat everyone with respect and dignity, and whatever their background to avoid degrading and stereotypical images and/or derogatory references to minority groups;
 - refrain from discriminatory or harassing behaviour which relates to current or historical conflict between people of different racial and/or cultural groups.

10. Monitoring and Review

- 10.1. All policies will be reviewed on a rolling basis to ensure their effectiveness in achieving equality of opportunity.
- 10.2. Although overall responsibility lies with the Management Board, it is the responsibility of School managers for initiating these in their area of operation.



- 10.3. The School will maintain a statistical record in terms of sex, age, and race from application stage through recruitment and career progression of staff, and recruitment and academic achievement of students, and provide regular management reports, making recommendations as appropriate.

11. Communication and Consultation

- 11.1. An Annual Report will be made to the Management Board and made available to staff and students on request.
- 11.2. In light of the above, where necessary, recommendations on where improvements could be made.

12. Breach of Policy

- 12.1. Complaints of discrimination on the grounds of the areas covered by this policy should be brought using the appropriate Grievance Procedures for staff or Complaints procedure for students.
- 12.2. If staff has any concerns they should speak to their line manager informally in the first instance. If a member of staff wishes to make a formal complaint, they should refer to the Staff Handbook.

13. Contact Details

- 13.1. For further information or guidance regarding any of the issues covered in the policy, please contact:
- 13.2. Mr Mohammed Zaidi, Deputy CEO (mohammed.zaidi@fairfield.ac)

14. Accessible format information

- 14.1. This document can be made available in large print and electronically upon request.
- 14.2. If you require another alternative format, please contact us to discuss your requirements.



Version History

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