



Fairfield School of Business

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

January 2022

Version 4.0

Approved by the Board of Governors

For Public Use



Quick Guide:

If you are a student, please use the Student Complaints Procedure to raise a concern if you feel you have been unfairly excluded or discriminated against, particularly if this was on the basis of your age, disability, gender or gender reassignment status, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

If you are subject to serious discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation, let your personal tutor, course leader or student support officer know as soon as possible as we may need to investigate under our Anti-bullying and Harassment procedures.

Members of staff should, in the first instance, speak to their line manager or Head of Department, who will consult with the HR Department. If these informal steps do not resolve the issue, the employee should contact their Faculty/Department HR Manager.

Severe breaches of this policy may be notified to the School's senior management using the School's Protected Disclosure (Whistleblowing) procedures.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Fairfield School of Business (“the School”) is committed promoting equal opportunities and fostering a diverse academic environment in which no one is subjected to discriminatory behaviour with respect to their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (as identified under the Equality Act 2010 as 'protected characteristics')
- 1.2. The School’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy has been informed by the *Equality Act (2010)*, which legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.
- 1.3. Equality, diversity and inclusion are themes central to School’s mission to contribute to the social and career mobility of individuals who may be returning to education, or who are from groups typically underrepresented in higher education.
- 1.4. The School does not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour, regardless of whether such behaviour is deliberate or inadvertent. Any failure to uphold these principles will generally be considered as a breach of the School’s Code of Conduct, warranting action to be taken under its disciplinary procedures.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all aspects of the School’s work as a learning provider and as an employer, however the School recognises the following to be of particular significance:
 - The selection and admission of students
 - The recruitment, development, promotion, and remuneration of staff
 - The accessibility of learning opportunities offered by the School
 - The assessment of students’ work
 - The provision of support and administrative services to students
 - The monitoring and evaluation of the student experience and student success
- 2.2. This policy is applicable to all School employees, students, visiting staff, and contractors or consultants working on the premises or on behalf of the School.

3. Guiding Principles

- 3.1. The School will comply fully and transparently with all applicable legal requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010 in ensuring that:

- Students, prospective students and employees of the School have equality of opportunity and are not unlawfully discriminated against,
- All persons with whom the School deals are treated fairly, and with dignity and respect.

3.2. The School will achieve this by:

- Promoting its values of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to members of its academic community and embedding them within its teaching and learning approaches,
- Setting mechanisms for effective oversight and evaluation of the accessibility of learning and employment opportunities,
- Fostering a culture within the School where people can feel confident about raising issues around equality, diversity and inclusion, and providing means of doing so,
- Establishing an admissions process which is supportive of the needs of all students and provides for assessment of learning support for those students who may have special needs,
- Making reasonable adjustments and adaptations to its learning opportunities and facilities where practicable,
- Considering and assessing the impact its decisions on particular groups who may be disadvantaged or excluded,
- Ensuring fair and sound investigative procedures are in place to review potential breaches of this policy and take remedial action,
- Providing appropriate support to anyone who has been unjustly discriminated against.

3.3. Statistical information regarding student equality and diversity will be provided to monitor provision and will focus primarily on:

- Enrolment data by equalities characteristics monitored by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA),
- Student progression and achievement data by age, gender, SEN status and ethnicity.

- 3.4. Review of equality and diversity data will inform the School's annual monitoring, which requires the critical appraisal of the quality and delivery of programmes, includes the analysis of data relating to student enrolment, progression and achievement, student feedback and complaints. Where issues are identified in relation to student demographics or protected characteristics, appropriate actions will be set and monitored through the annual monitoring process.
- 3.5. All data used as part of the monitoring process will be managed in accordance with the School's Data Protection Policy.

4. Students

Recruitment of students

- 4.1. The School recruits all students on the basis of their academic suitability to the programme applied for, without bias and by reference to their skills, ability, qualifications and potential.
- 4.2. The School is committed, through its mission, to make its learning opportunities accessible to anyone who may benefit from them and regardless of their academic background. Students are able to submit applications for non-standard entry through consideration of professional or alternative qualifications, or significant relevant professional experience.

Teaching and assessment

- 4.3. The School ensures that all new programme proposals and modifications to existing programmes are designed to be accessible to students across all backgrounds, particularly those who are returning to education, or who have limited experience of an academic environment.
- 4.4. In its delivery of programme content, the School shall adopt a pedagogy which is supportive and appropriate for its intended audience.
- 4.5. It is a fundamental principle of academic freedom that reasoned argument may be employed to test and challenge views, opinions and assertions of all kinds, however such discussions will be appropriately moderated to ensure they remain academic and objective in nature.
- 4.6. Students are able to access a range of assessment methods which are designed to be mindful of the varying and diverse needs of the student population, and which are reflective of current sector and professional practice.

- 4.7. The School uses rigorous protocols to ensure that the assessment of student's learning outcomes reflects their true academic ability. Formative assessments are sampled and reviewed by external examiners against unambiguous learning outcome descriptors. As such no student will be unfairly penalised in their assessment on the basis of having a protected characteristic.

Special Educational Needs

- 4.8. The School is committed to dealing in a fair and considerate manner with the special educational needs that individual students may have and wherever possible, to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate those needs, whilst maintaining the integrity of the academic standards and quality of the qualifications it offers.
- 4.9. Special arrangements will be made on an individual basis, based on precedent.
- 4.10. Students are expected to make a disability known either to their Admissions Advisor at the point of application, or to their Student Support team as soon as the disability becomes known to them. School staff will endeavour to assess the student's needs and the implications for their study. Where appropriate, evidence may be required to support a request for special arrangements to be made.
- 4.11. Where necessary, the School will support students to access additional external support, such as funding through Disabled Student Allowance (DSA).

5. Employees

Recruitment

- 5.1. The School aims to attract and recruit employees who are of a high professional calibre and who are appropriately qualified and capable of performing the duties expected of them. It is naturally within the School's interests to appoint the most suitable candidates available to it.
- 5.2. The School will give equal consideration to appropriately qualified applicants during the recruitment process and will not discriminate unlawfully.
- 5.3. The School's criteria for selection will relate to the requirements of the job, relevant qualifications, and relevant experience. The person specification is objective, ensuring that all the criteria included are appropriate and relevant to the performance of the job in question.

- 5.4. Shortlisting and interviewing processes will be thorough, fair and free from discrimination. To support this, the School will provide training for all employees involved in recruitment and selection to help them understand our processes and make them aware of relevant employment laws.
- 5.5. If an applicant has a disability, the School will make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment and selection process, and if successful in their application, to workplace and working arrangements so the individual can work at the School.
- 5.6. The School will promote best practice in recruitment and selection. It will continuously develop its recruitment and selection practices to allow new ideas and approaches to be incorporated.

Pay and conditions

- 5.7. The School supports the principle of equality of treatment in employment and is committed to ensuring that procedures to determine the pay, conditions and promotion prospects of all employees do not discriminate unlawfully and are free from bias.
- 5.8. The School understands that equal pay between men and women is a legal right under UK employment law.

Training and development:

- 5.9. The School is committed to ensuring that colleagues are aware of, and are actively implementing, what is required of them in order to comply with School policies and all relevant legislation.
- 5.10. The School does not discriminate when providing training and development that allows staff to carry out their jobs more effectively. This applies to full-time or part-time or on a permanent or fixed-term contract.

6. Raising a Concern

- 6.1. The School provides several avenues through which concerns about equality, diversity or inclusion may be brought to its attention:
 - Prospective students may use the admissions complaints procedure, should they feel they have been unfairly refused a place at the School, or unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of having a protected characteristic.
 - Students should use the School's Student Complaints Procedure to raise concerns where they feel they have been unfairly excluded or inadvertently discriminated against. Additionally, students can collectively engage with the

management of the School via their elected representatives, to promote issues of equality, diversity and inclusion within the School's committees of oversight.

- Serious and/or deliberate instances of discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation may warrant separate investigation under the School's Anti-bullying and Harassment procedures. Such cases will be investigated as breaches of the School's Codes of Conduct and the School may take disciplinary action against individuals who behave abusively to members of the School's Academic community.
- If a member of staff wishes to raise a concern about fair and equal treatment, they should, in the first instance, speak to their line manager or Head of Department, who will consult with the HR Department. If these informal steps do not resolve the issue, the employee should contact their Faculty/Department HR Manager.
- Severe breaches of this policy may be notified to the School's senior management using its Protected Disclosure (Whistleblowing) procedures.

7. Responsibility for Implementing this Policy

- 7.1. The School's governing body will ensure that there are procedures in place for promoting its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, including procedures for the prompt and thorough investigation of breaches.



Version Tracking:

Version	Author / revisions by	Changes summary	Approved by	Date
1.0 – 3.7	Deputy CEO Principal Legal Advisor	Original version and subsequent updates	ExecCo.	Sep' 17 Jan '18 Mar '19 Sep '19
3.8	Quality Officer Principal	Version reformatted; version control added – minor factual corrections	Board of Governors	Nov '19
3.9	Quality Officer Principal	Annual review – minor factual corrections throughout.	Board of Governors	Sep '20
4.0	Quality Officer Principal Deputy CEO	Substantial re-write to closer align with EHRC guidance	Board of Governors	Jan '22