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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Metanoia Institute

Version Control

Document title: Equality and Diversity Policy		No of pages: 12
Version Number: 2.0	Date first published: 2022	
Approved by: Executive	Last review date: April 2024	
Date originally approved: 2022	Due for next review: April 2027	

Related policies
• Disciplinary Policy • Anti-Harassment & Anti-Bullying Policy • Whistleblowing Policy • Grievance Policy • Dignity at work and Study Policy
External Reference
• Equality Act 2010 • <u>Part-time workers' rights - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</u>

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Metanoia Institute Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Policy Statement

Metanoia Institute is fully committed to promoting and implementing equality of opportunity in the learning, teaching, research and working environment to create a learning and working environment based on fostering good relations between all staff, with a shared commitments to promoting respect for all.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or member of staff receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex or sexual orientation
- or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.

The Institute will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It will not discriminate because of any other irrelevant factor and will build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness, and transparency.

Other aspects of a person's identity, background or circumstances can cause them to experience discrimination, for example a person's socio-economic status, class, or background. Metanoia Institute is committed to advancing equality, inclusion and eliminating discrimination on these and other grounds. Equality, diversity and inclusion is central to all we do, and all students, staff and stakeholders will be made aware of this policy.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this equality, diversity and inclusion policy is to define the Metanoia's approach to equality and diversity in the work and study place, setting out guidelines and explaining to staff and students how discrimination will be dealt with.

The aim of the policy is to ensure no job applicant, employee or worker is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for our recruitment and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and made known to all applicants for employment.

The policy will be communicated to all private contractors reminding them of their responsibilities towards the equality of opportunity.

The policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.

3. Scope

The policy is applicable to all employees, students, secondees, agency staff, clients, communities, suppliers, and contractors, whether permanent or temporary.

The policy applies to all processes relating to recruitment, employment and training and to any dealings with clients. Decisions relating to students and communities will be based on business-related criteria only and any irrelevant information will not form part of the process.

All employees are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy. Behaviour, actions, or words that transgress the policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the Institute's disciplinary policy.

4. Definitions

In line with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, the Institute believes that 'unacceptable behaviour' is behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for that person. Unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated by anyone and will be challenged.

The terms equality, inclusion and diversity are at the heart of this policy. 'Equality' means ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination. 'Inclusion' means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their contribution. 'Diversity' means the celebration of individual differences amongst the workforces. We will actively support diversity and inclusion and ensure that all our employees are valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone in our business to reach their potential.

'Protected characteristics' according to The Equality Act the groups of individuals that were protected by the previous equalities legislation includes age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and students are expected to act in accordance with this policy and to carry out their responsibilities regarding equality, diversity & inclusion fairly and without discrimination.

5.1 The Institute/Executive will:

- ***Student Recruitment***

Develop entry criteria, which are clear and do not discriminate unfairly by, for example, only referring to traditional entry qualifications.

- ***Curriculum Development –***

Take ownership of equality, diversity and inclusion by implementing the policy and its related action plan. They will also ensure the development of alternative full-time and part-time forms of study, which would have the advantages of shorter-term objectives and transferability (to other courses) for those who may find difficulty in committing themselves initially to three or more years of study.

- ***Access & Educational Opportunities for Under-Represented Groups***

Will ensure the development and adherence to policies and practices, such as publicity, admissions, student, and staff support and curriculum development policies, which encourage greater participation and access by disadvantaged groups. They will seek to increase the number of courses designed to be particularly attractive for under-represented groups, taking advantage wherever possible of any external funding available and working closely with local and national bodies, which seek to extend educational opportunities for these groups.

- ***Student Support –***

Will ensure that the general facilities and services to students – e.g., library, faith facilities, etc., are appropriately designed to meet the needs of a culturally diverse student body and that they are also accessible to students with disabilities.

- ***Staff Recruitment, Induction & Development –***

Will consider physical adjustments and flexibility in working practices. Supporting candidates with disabilities to take up positions within Metanoia Institute (in line with the Disability Discrimination Act). Will ensure that the Institute's recruitment, selection,

admissions, and promotion processes adhere to the Institute's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Metanoia will not insist on higher education or professional qualifications other than those which are strictly necessary to do the job. In choosing someone for a job the ability to provide the service needed is viewed as of primary importance. As a part of this, a candidate's experience will be taken into consideration and rated for equivalency in relation to professional-experience requirements.

Metanoia will, as the need arises, for example through growth, vacancies and restructuring, review and redesign where necessary, the requirements of individual jobs. Where appropriate new work patterns and flexible, working arrangements will be considered and introduced to widen opportunities. Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with this policy. Will ensure all job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications, adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies, not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.

Metanoia will ensure all applicants who apply for advertised vacancies will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job. Will ensure that all employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

Metanoia will ensure that short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person where possible and that interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

We will not disqualify any applicant because they are unable to complete an application form unassisted, unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job. And that selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff.

- ***Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures***

We will ensure the development and monitoring of systems that mean that allegations of discrimination and harassment are responded to fairly, quickly, and effectively.

5.2 Faculty Head/Director of Studies/Academic Lecturers

- ***Publicity***

Will ensure that there is scrutiny of all publicity and promotion materials and marketing related activities to ensure that brochures, advertisements, applications forms, and display materials reflect the diversity of all potential students.

- ***Student Recruitment & Admissions –***

Will ensure that they monitor the profile of entrants to their programmes and identify the nature and cause of significant under-representation within their student intake.

- ***Curriculum Development***

Will develop curriculums which promote equality, diversity, and inclusion and promote understanding and respect for all cultures, political beliefs, and religious convictions. As a part of this, the curriculum will expose students to cases and methodologies that incorporate variations by gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and religion. They will ensure that all members of the team take an approach to teaching which recognises that an appreciation of students' diversity, cultural background and individual learning style is an essential element of any approach to academic delivery. They will communicate regularly with their teams about equality issues in a way that keeps this policy and its action plan live and central to the aims of the team.

- ***Student Support –***

Will strive to continue to meet the needs of our students and continue our commitment to widening participation.

- ***Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures –***

Will ensure that all students and staff know how to raise complaints and that they provide a timely and sensitive response.

5.3 Business Support

- ***Publicity***

The institute will take a proactive approach towards marketing courses to under-represented groups,

- ***Student Recruitment & Admissions***

Will develop, with their programme leaders, recruitment strategies that are designed to attract groups that are currently under- represented and keeping data that can help identify areas where this is not being done.

Will develop entry criteria, which are clear and do not discriminate unfairly by, for example, only referring to traditional entry qualifications.

- ***Access & Educational Opportunities for Under-Represented Groups –***

Will keep the programme leaders apprised of any requests for changes in course structure, or interest in different patterns of courses, such as extensions of short courses, part-time and evening provision, and the creation of more flexible learning opportunities so that students can vary their pace of study.

- ***Student Support –***

Will inform students of any policies or processes that may help them if they are aware of any students who seem to be struggling with any aspects of the areas outlined in this policy.

- ***Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures***

Will effectively identify and challenge discriminatory behaviour and attitudes and speaking out and reporting if they witness or are a victim of any form of discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment, or harassment.

5.4 Students

- ***Curriculum Development***

Students will reflect on their practice in relation to equal opportunities and diversity issues seeking additional training or support as necessary. They will also co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity, diversity, and anti-oppressive practice and take equal responsibility in ensuring that a learning environment is created where people are valued and respected.

- ***Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures –***

Students will challenge any form of discrimination and speaking out, or reporting it if they witness or are aware of discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment and not assuming that it is someone else's responsibility.

5.5 EDI Committee

- ***Publicity –***

The ED&I committee will undertake monitoring exercises on the above to determine the most effective means of contacting people from under-represented groups. Ensure that all publicity that is produced by or for the Institute in keeping with the aims and sentiment of this Equality and Diversity Policy.

- ***Curriculum Development –***

The committee will ensure that the curriculums are monitored to appreciate the degree to which they are meeting their aims and advice, where necessary on any revisions that

may assist in this regard. They will, for example, arrange for the sharing of best practice across programmes and develop an equality, diversity & inclusion resource list.

- **Student Support**

Will develop a system of support and liaison for students/staff who are members of minority groups and develop a system for feedback and action, on these concerns. They will work to enable and encourage, where wanted, the setting up of support.

groups for members who share a collective identity.

6. Dealing with Discrimination

We perceive bullying, harassment, and victimisation of any individual as contradictory to our aspirations for a supportive working environment and will not be tolerated. Any allegations of such behaviour will be investigated, and ultimately disciplined, in accordance with the “Dignity at work and study policy.”

7. Complaints

Everyone is entitled to be treated with respect and fairness. Discriminatory or offensive behaviour, which breaches the Equality and Diversity Policy, will not be tolerated. Incidents of discrimination or harassment will be dealt with through the Institute’s Complaints Procedure, the Anti-Harassment and Bullying Procedures, or the Disciplinary or Grievance Procedure as appropriate.

Staff who believe they have not been treated equitably in accordance with the Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy should raise the matter with their line manager in the first instance.

Heads of Departments, senior members of staff, and managers are responsible for dealing with complaints from staff under this policy with support from the HR Department.

If the complaint is against their line manager, staff should raise it with their Head of Department. If this does not resolve the matter, the member of staff may make a complaint in accordance with the Grievance Procedure – the first step of which is to establish whether the complaint may be resolved informally.

No member of staff will be victimised for bringing a complaint under this policy. However, where a complaint is made maliciously and/or on knowingly false information, the complainant may be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure.

8. Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be implemented through the Metanoia's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Our HR Department will collect and analyse monitoring data on staff with regard to recruitment, training, promotion, re-grading, and complaints and report this information annually to the Diversity and Equality Advisory Group.

The Academic Office will collect and analyse student monitoring data with regard to recruitment, progression and completion and report this information annually to the Diversity and Equality team. This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it reflects best practice and current legislation.

All staff are advised to familiarise themselves with this policy and the appropriate Metanoia Policies. Any issues related to this policy, please contact hr@metanoia.ac.uk

Annex 1 – Definition of Protected Characteristics

Metanoia Equality and Diversity Policy Definition of Protected Characteristics

There are nine protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity

Age

- ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity.
- ensure that people are given equal access to our employment, training, development, and promotion opportunities and
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability

- provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities. If we feel that a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will discuss this with you and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people and
- seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting, and sign language interpretation.
- If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.
- We will keep the physical features of our premises under review to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.

Race

- challenge racism wherever it occurs.
- respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents and
- actively promote race equality and inclusion in the Organisation
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone.
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same.

Gender

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about gender.
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone.
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same and
- provide support to prevent discrimination against transgender people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

Sexual orientation

- ensure that take account of the needs of everyone, including the LGBTQ+ communities.
- promote positive images of the LGBTQ+ communities.
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the LGBTQ+ communities.
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone and
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same.

Religion or belief

- ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible and
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

Pregnancy or maternity

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity during pregnancy or maternity leave.
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about pregnancy or maternity and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged during pregnancy or maternity leave and that we take account of the needs of our employees' during pregnancy or maternity leave.

Marriage or civil partnership

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity regardless of marriage or civil partnership status.
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged as a result of their marriage or civil partnership status.