

AHCS

Equality and Diversity Policy

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Introduction

The Academy for Healthcare Science (AHCS) is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst: all the people we serve, those who work with us, staff and applicants.

Our aim is to be truly representative of all sections of society, to create and sustain a positive and supportive environment for our staff, and to ensure anyone interacting with the organisation is treated fairly, equitably and feels supported by the Academy.

Diversity - we view the diversity of our staff, volunteers and stakeholders as a great asset.

Equity - we believe in the equitable treatment of all.

The Academy's Equality and Diversity policy influences both strategy and implementation.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide and promote equality and fairness for all in our dealings with individuals and not to discriminate because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

Discrimination can come in one of the following forms:

- direct discrimination - treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others;
- indirect discrimination - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage;
- harassment - unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them;
- victimisation - treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment.

Everyone we deal with, contract with or employ will be treated fairly and with respect.

Applicants for equivalence or registration will be assessed on the basis of the published standards required for safe and effective practice and this alone. Applicants will be asked to complete an optional equality and diversity monitoring form which will be separated from application materials prior to assessment and review. This allows us to monitor and audit our commitment to equality and diversity.

Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Responsibility

The AHCS Board holds overall responsibility for ensuring that the Academy complies with the Equality Act 2010, including the general duty to have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Chief Executive will be advised by the Governance and Scrutiny Committee, which is responsible for developing policy and practice at the Academy and for advising staff in order to support compliance with equality legislation. A nominated non-executive director (the Chair of the Governance and Scrutiny Committee, unless specified otherwise) is the nominated contact for any public interest concerns about potential breaches of this policy ('whistleblowing').

Our commitments

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all individuals are recognised and valued.
- Everyone is entitled to an environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff and individuals working with the Academy.
- Equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will regularly review all our registration, equivalence and employment practices and procedures, to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be taken extremely seriously, regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings or, in the case of applicants, refusal of certification on grounds of professional unsuitability.

- This policy will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis by the Governance and Scrutiny Committee.

What you can do if you feel you are discriminated against or at risk of being discriminated against

The Academy encourages anyone concerned about discrimination to raise their concerns.

If you are concerned that you or others may be discriminated against you can complain directly to the person you feel is discriminating, to a senior member of staff or to the Chair of the Academy Board. The Academy will investigate the complaint sensitively and take any appropriate action.

Our contact details are:

Academy for Healthcare Science
6 The Terrace
Rugby Road
Lutterworth
Leicestershire LE17 4BW
Email: admin@ahcs.ac.uk

If you do not feel comfortable complaining to the Academy then you can complain to a third party to seek mediation.

The Equality Advisory & Support Service offers telephone and online advice and support:
www.equalityadvisoryservice.com