

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The Equal Opportunities policy applies in relation to all aspects of the Academy's teaching programme, administration, management and support. All Students, Staff, Tutors, and visitors are expected to act with due regard to the Equal Opportunities Policy, without exception.

It is the responsibility of ALL students, staff and tutors to familiarise themselves with this policy.

The Academy is committed to the principle of equality and strives to create a genuine atmosphere of equality and inclusivity by having a study environment free from unfair and unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation on the grounds of gender, disability, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, race, ethnic or national origin.

It is the responsibility of the Academy as education provider and employer:

- To ensure that all relevant Acts are observed and that no discrimination is permitted on grounds of colour, race, nationality, marital status or sex.
- To ensure a positive attitude towards equality of opportunity and the administration of staff policies to that end.
- To communicate the terms of this policy to each Student, member of Staff and Tutor, with guidance in the use of the Academy's grievance procedures as a means of making any grievance of discrimination or failure to accord equality of opportunity.

The following behaviour will not be tolerated:

- Direct Discrimination: where a person is less favourably treated on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origin, sex, pregnancy, marital status, disability or sexual orientation
- Indirect Discrimination: where a requirement that cannot be justified objectively is applied equally to all groups, but has a disproportionately adverse effect on one particular group
- Bullying: the misuse of power and aggression, sometimes subtle in nature, intended to hurt, humiliate and belittle an individual or group of individuals
- Harassment: unwanted and unsolicited conduct that is personally offensive to the recipient and therefore fails to respect the rights and dignity of others. It may include behaviour connected with the gender, race, disability, marital status or sexual orientation of an individual
- Victimisation: where a person is treated less favourably than others because he/she has in good faith alleged that LFA is in breach of Government legislation relating to discrimination, pursued a claim against LFA under Government legislation relating to discrimination or assisted another person in pursuing such a claim against LFA
- Positive Discrimination: unlawful behaviour such as choosing a woman for promotion because of her sex whilst ignoring other skills/abilities to do the job. People often confuse positive action with positive discrimination. Positive action is lawful as it allows encouragement and training to overcome the effects of past discrimination so that the under-represented group has an equal opportunity with others.

The Academy works in a wider context and recognises the existence of institutionalised discrimination, prejudice and oppression within the industry and the damage this creates by limiting the development of people's full potential.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION



The Academy is committed to the fair, consistent and continuous implementation of this policy. It is monitored by the Joint Principals through consultation with the Course Leaders, Lead Tutors, Coordinators, other staff and the Academy Executive Committee meetings.

The responsibility for the implementation of the policy lies with all Students, Staff and Tutors who are expected to:

- Treat Students, Staff, Tutors, colleagues and visitors with respect
- Pay attention and respect to individual differences, for example making sure that someone's name is pronounced properly
- Take care with their use of spoken and written language. The way things are phrased and written needs to be understandable and appropriate
- Use language with care so as not to promote stereotypes or demean people
- Contribute to making the LFA a pleasant, safe and disciplined place in which to study and work
- Have high standards and expectations of performance and achievement for themselves, colleagues, visitors, Students, Staff and Tutors
- To promote an atmosphere of sharing and caring
- Take part in a continuous programme of professional development to support and enhance their skills and attitudes
- Be prepared to challenge their own attitudes
- Confront and challenge behaviour and attitudes that are discriminatory
- Take every opportunity to forge links with the community, be responsive to its needs and nurture reciprocal respect
- Identify areas of work, over which they have control, and set appropriate targets, eg giving greater value to students' prior experience, challenging stereotyping, considering whether course designs encourage a balanced student mix. Having identified targets, all staff groups should decide when and how they are going to be achieved.

Additional responsibilities may be allocated to some individuals/groups in addition to those mentioned above. For example, the Senior Management Team has a responsibility for ensuring that scarce resources are targeted at initiatives that support and develop the policy.

ACADEMY ENVIRONMENT

The Academy, both in its physical location and its ethos, will reflect its cultural diversity and its aim to provide a fully inclusive learning environment. The Student, Staff and Tutor disciplinary codes indicate that the Academy is opposed to racist, sexist and discriminatory behaviour of any kind. Disciplinary action will be taken against perpetrators (whether staff, tutors or students) of such behaviour (see the [Disciplinary Rules, Procedures & Appeals and Complaints Policies](#)).

The physical environment, literature and publicity of the Academy will reflect the diverse composition of our society through such means as displays, notices and the provision of space for cultural events across the Academy. The Academy will:

- Keep under review accessibility of all its buildings, and where possible (within financial constraints) remove barriers that prevent people with disabilities from participating fully in the Academy as students
- Ensure that all information, signs and notices are written in a clear and accessible way, so that all students can understand and actively engage with them.
- Not permit offensive material of any type
- support individuals who are victims of oppressive behaviour and provide guidance/training for perpetrators.



ACADEMY PUBLICITY

Academy publicity material will:

- Take account of the multi-lingual nature of the student body by indicating that language support is available
- Avoid the use of stereotyped images in its publicity materials
- Promote the diversity and achievements of its students through publicity images
- Target publicity at groups in the community that are under-represented in the Academy and where appropriate in the major languages spoken by the student body
- Inform counselling agencies, schools and employers of prospective students that the Academy welcomes applications from all disadvantaged groups.

STUDENT ADMISSION

It is the policy of the Academy that Students, Staff and Tutors, are recruited, trained and graded/promoted on the basis of their ability, their fitness for study/work and the requirements for the course/job regardless of gender, disability, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, race, ethnic or national origin.

Academy application forms allow students to provide information about their special needs so that, where possible, the necessary facilities and/or support can be provided. If a suitable course cannot be provided, every effort will be made to give guidance on alternative provision.

During the process of application, interview (here applicable) and enrolment students are informed what facilities are available to manage and support any special needs such as physical or learning disability. In order to maximise the benefit to students the LFA encourages applicants to raise any concerns regarding the facilities, building access and support as soon as possible.

All applicants who have disclosed a disability on their application form, must also provide the Academy detailed information about their disability/learning difficulty and the impact it may have on their study. This will enable students and the Academy to make informed decisions together on how student needs can be met effectively. Upon receipt of the questionnaire the student will be invited to discuss their individual learning support needs with the Course Leader and/or Joint Principals.

LFA's Equal Opportunities Policy applies to the Terms & Conditions of enrolment with LFA. If students did not provide their gender, ethnicity or disability on their application form please ensure they have completed and returned the relevant form (see the Forms section of the Student Handbook).

CURRICULUM AND ACADEMIC PROVISION

When planning and implementing teaching schemes, including academic modules for Diploma courses, the Academy will ensure that all matters relating to Equal Opportunities are given due consideration in order to meet the needs of all students.

Course Leaders, Coordinators and Tutors concerned with preparing teaching and learning materials are encouraged to develop an awareness of the following:

- possible bias and stereotypes
- to make use of and project positive images of the achievements and interests of all races, religions, genders, people with disabilities
- include texts and materials which reflect the diversity of modern society in terms of race, age, gender, religion etc.



- use a variety of teaching skills/methods/formats which support those students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

LEARNING SUPPORT

The Academy encourages the active participation of all students who require additional support in the design, implementation and review of that support. When seeking support the following contacts are available to students:

- The Admissions Team can assist with any initial enquiries and those related to the application process
- The Course Leader, Coordinator or Lead Tutor will deal with any academic problems experienced
- The Vice Principal or Joint Principal (DG) will deal with any grievances about the support
- BA Students also have access to support and resources via Blackboard, as well as the 'Enhance your learning' section of Udo

Codes of Practice and Staff/Tutor guidelines are developed to ensure that the specific needs of particular students, or groups of students, are understood and addressed by relevant Staff and/or Tutors at the appropriate time and encourage the development and supply of specialist learning materials and resources to meet the identified support needs of particular groups or individuals

The Academy encourages all staff to support students by seeking to alleviate problems of access to rooms, services, materials and/or equipment. This can be achieved through a number of methods including but not limited to offering personal assistance, providing advice/guidance through external and internal contacts, or providing assistive technology/equipment. Where applicable students are required to seek support from external agencies.

Students who speak English as a second language or additional language have the opportunity to follow courses appropriate to their competence in areas other than English language.

Please note that only BA students at LFA are eligible for the Disabled Students' Allowances [DSA] so students should ensure that they have sufficient funding to support all their needs.

Students should note that disabled parking is not available at the Academy.

SUPPORT STAFF

Where appropriate the Academy will facilitate the inclusion of support staff in partnership with students to enable appropriate provision and preparation to be made.

STAFF & TUTOR RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

In order to support the Equal Opportunities Policy and to maintain the most positive learning experience for all students, the Academy actively seeks staff who feel they can contribute to the diverse and inclusive nature of the Academy. The LFA will also encourage members of their staff to train and re-train in order to meet the needs of a culturally diverse student body.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSMENTS

The Academy will consider this Equal Opportunities Policy when planning and implementing assessment criteria.



The Academy will also ensure that that course assignments are written in a clear and accessible way, so that all students understand the tasks and the criteria against which they are being assessed

In the case of students with disabilities, the Academy will adopt a flexible approach to additional arrangements for examinations. Once we have received appropriate medical or educational psychologist evidence. The scope of additional arrangements for examinations includes:

- Extra time
- Rest breaks
- Examination scripts in large print, braille, coloured paper, modified language
- Use of a computer
- Reader
- Amanuensis [scribe]
- Use of specialist software e.g. texthelp! read and write, inspiration, screen reading software, etc

SPECIFIC PROVISION

DISABILITY

Special Educational Needs & Disability Act (Senda)

The Disability Discrimination Act Part I defines a disabled person as someone with *"a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."*

The Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001 established specific legal rights for disabled students. It introduces the right for disabled students not to be discriminated against in education and training and any services provided mainly or partly for students. In practice this means that it would be unlawful for the Academy to treat a disabled person 'less favourably' than a non-disabled person for a reason that relates to that person's disability.

The Academy welcomes students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties and is committed to the implementation and continuing development of an "enabling" environment and a non-discriminatory culture within the Academy community.

Where possible the Academy will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students' needs, however, what amounts to reasonable adjustment varies according to the type of services being provided, the extent to which it is practicable to take that step and the relevant interests of other people.

HARASSMENT & BULLYING

Harassment and bullying are regarded as unacceptable conduct that can have long-term effects on the morale and wellbeing of an individual. It is unwanted and unsolicited conduct that is personally offensive to the recipient. It may include behaviour connected with sex, race or disability. It may be because of the political or religious convictions, the age, status or sexual orientation of an individual.

Offences that may constitute harassment and bullying may include but are not limited to:

- Derogatory remarks or threats which may relate to sexual orientation, race, disability, physical attributes, gender, religion, age, political affiliation
- Requests for sexual favours
- Unwanted sexual advances
- Displays of sexually offensive material, eg. pin-ups
- Threats of a poor assessment if sexual favours are denied



- Insensitive jokes or pranks
- Insulting or aggressive behaviour
- Ignoring or excluding an individual
- Setting unrealistic deadlines
- Public criticism or humiliation
- Substituting menial or trivial tasks for responsible ones
- Withholding necessary information
- Repeatedly undervaluing effort

Harassment and bullying may consist of a single act or a series of acts and may take the form of emotional, mental or physical abuse. It may be directed towards an individual or a group of individuals.

LFA undertakes to remove/paint over any offensive literature or graffiti found on its premises and to take action against those found responsible.

RELIGION & BELIEF

LFA supports the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion is absolute, but the right to manifest beliefs is qualified by the need to protect the rights and freedoms of others.

The Academy will make reasonable efforts to provide a suitable space for religious observance. In some cases individual requirements will be met by facilities in the neighbourhood.

LFA imposes no dress code on its students and employees, and welcomes the variety of appearance brought by individual styles and choices. Wearing of clothing such as hijab, kippah, mangal sutra, turban are all welcome and supported by LFA, however this diversity is subject to the following limitations:

- Health and safety requirements may mean that for certain tasks specific items of clothing such as overalls and protective clothing need to be worn. If such clothing produces a conflict with an individual's religious belief, the issue will be sympathetically considered by your Course Leader, Coordinator or Line Manager, with the aim of finding a satisfactory compromise.
- Dress should conform to the current majority view in our society of what constitutes appropriateness and decency
- Wearing slogans or symbols which are discriminatory (e.g. racist or sexist) is a disciplinary offence and will be dealt with accordingly.

Requests for leave of absence due to religious observance will be treated sympathetically.

Requests for extended leave, especially relating to pilgrimage, will be considered carefully by the Academy. All responsible attempts will be made to accommodate the request, however extended leave may have a negative impact on a student's ability to graduate.



SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The Academy recognises the extent of heterosexist assumptions in society, and the existence of homophobia, and seeks to ensure that any prejudice (heterosexism) and discrimination against individuals and groups who are lesbian, gay or bisexual or are perceived to be so is dealt with swiftly.

Homophobic propaganda, such as written material or graffiti, will not be tolerated. The Academy undertakes to remove any such propaganda whenever it appears on the premises and to take action against those responsible it will provide a supportive environment for Students, Staff and Tutors who wish it to be known that they are lesbian, gay or bisexual. It is the right of the individuals to choose whether they wish to be open about their sexuality in the Academy. To disclose someone's sexuality, whether student or staff, without their permission is a form of harassment, and will be treated as such.

HIV/AIDS

There is no justification for discrimination against anyone with HIV/AIDS. Individuals who know they have HIV/AIDS are not obliged to tell anyone in the Academy of their condition, but if they do confidentiality is assured. The Academy will protect individuals who wish to make it public from discrimination. People with HIV/AIDS will be treated no differently from anyone else suffering from any life-threatening non-contagious illness in relation to sickness procedures. We accept that there is no risk of infection of HIV/AIDS through normal workplace contact.

If victimisation/harassment occurs, the offending Student, member of Staff or Tutor will be subject to formal action. Course Leaders/Coordinators and Managers will treat any such acts as a serious matter. Deliberate breaches of confidentiality may constitute a disciplinary offence.

ISSUES & GRIEVANCES

The Academy encourage all Students, Staff and Tutors who think they have experienced or witnessed behaviour that is unfair and unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation on the grounds of gender, disability, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, race, ethnic or national origin, to act promptly and report incidents for investigation and action.

Grievances regarding breaches in the Equal Opportunities policy can come from the following sources:

- Students about Staff or Tutors
- Students about each other
- Staff or Tutors about students
- Staff or Tutors about each other

Write down a brief description of the unwanted behaviour or keep a diary of the incidents as they occur. Make a note of the date and a brief summary of what was said for future reference. Try to speak informally to the person(s) responsible and ask them to stop the unwanted behaviour.

If the informal approach fails and the behaviour persists, report the matter to the Course Leader, Coordinator or Tutor. If the Tutor or Student is the source of the unwanted behaviour report the matter to the Course Leader or Coordinator. If the Course Leader or Coordinator is the source of the unwanted behaviour report the matter to either of the Joint Principals.

Where Students suspect others are being harassed, bullied or discriminated against the Academy requests that they do not intervene or interfere to prevent the situation from escalating. Students, Staff or Tutors should make a note of exactly what was seen and heard and refer the matter



immediately to the relevant Course Leader/Coordinator/Line Manager or Joint Principals who will take responsibility for the issue.

Harassment, bullying and discrimination are regarded by the Academy as Gross Misconduct for which expulsion with or without notice under LFA Disciplinary Procedures may be appropriate (see the [LFA Disciplinary Rules, Procedures and Appeals Policy](#)).

The effect of the unwanted behaviour on the person who claims to have been harassed or bullied will be an important factor to be taken into account when considering an allegation of harassment and bullying, whether or not the behaviour was intended to be harmful.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Academy will monitor this Equal Opportunities Policy through its Students, Staff and Tutors and will submit reports where necessary to the Joint Principals.

To ensure that the educational provision offered by the Academy is compatible with the aims of the Equal Opportunities policy, the Academy will monitor the progress of its students through the collection of statistical data, evidence from course tutors and the contributions of the students themselves. This process will form part of the Quality Assurance process and the system for Course Review and Evaluation.

The Academy pays particular attention to standards and quality and implements appropriate systems through its Executive Committee. This includes a student feedback and grievance procedure. If students are dissatisfied with any aspect of the Academy's services in respect to Equal Opportunities, they should follow the procedures in place as outlined in the general [Complaints Policy](#).

