



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

June 2021

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction

St Mary's University is fully committed to creating an inclusive culture, promoting equality of opportunity and respecting differences amongst its staff, students and other stakeholders. The University has a long tradition, in line with its mission and values, of widening access to education for all, while fostering respect and mutual tolerance in society as a whole. Consistent with our mission, we believe that inequities and barriers to inclusiveness are a key social and moral challenge that we are committed to tackling.

We have a strong mission to prepare students for flourishing lives, successful careers and social commitment through excellent, research enriched teaching in a strong community of mutual respect based on our Catholic ethos, identity and values of:

- Respect
- Generosity of spirit
- Inclusiveness
- Excellence

The promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion is an important part of this mission and we aim to continue our long tradition of widening access to education to all but also to foster respect and mutual tolerance in the wider society.

The University is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and inclusivity for all in line with our duties under the law and our belief in the virtue of tolerance and diversity. We will not tolerate discrimination in any form.

Under the general equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, we must have due regard to the need 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.

*A protected characteristic covers age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief (including no belief) – refer to **Appendix A**.

Specifically, we commit to:

- Proactively prevent and eliminate discrimination for staff and students on the grounds of any protected characteristic;
- Promote good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it;
- Foster an environment in which all staff and students can realise their full potential through the development of their skills and abilities, regardless of their background;
- Ensure that all students, staff, applicants to the University are treated with respect and dignity and receive fair and equal treatment in all aspects of their applications, employment or learning;
- Ensure that all staff comply with the University's policies and procedures through the provision of appropriate training.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Overall responsibility for the Policy lies with the Board of Governors. Leadership for the implementation of the policy comes from the Vice Chancellor and senior staff. All staff, students and visitors are expected to act within the remit of the policy and to take responsibility for its successful implementation.

1. Responsibility for Implementation of the Policy:

The Vice-Chancellor and Senior Staff have overall responsibility for the implementation of the Policy.

All Directors of Faculty/Institutes and Heads of Service are responsible for:

- Ensuring they and their staff follow the policy;
- Ensuring all policies and procedures within their remit are impact assessed and monitored to ensure that they are promoting equality and not discriminatory;
- Ensuring staff are appropriately trained to ensure the delivery of equality and inclusive practice.

The Director of Human Resources (HR) will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that central procedures relating to recruitment, appointment, promotion and staff development promote equality of opportunity and inclusion;
- Provision of relevant and essential equality, inclusion and diversity training to University employees.
- Producing, as Chair of the EDI Staff Board, an annual report and action plan on activity and progress in relation to staff equality and inclusion, for consideration by the Finance and Resources Committee.

The Head of Widening Participation, as Chair of the Equality and Inclusion Student Issues Group (with the necessary support as appropriate of the Dean of Learning and Teaching), will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that all central procedures and policies relating to the management of and assessment of current students promote equality and inclusion;
- Monitoring the diversity of the student population;
- Monitoring the progress of students to ensure no direct or indirect discrimination takes place.
- Producing an annual report and action plan on activity and progress in relation to student equality and inclusion, for consideration by the Finance and Resources Committee

The Pro Vice-Chancellor of Global Engagement will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that publicity, marketing and communication is undertaken and which respects the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement (refer also Sections 11 and 12 below).

The Head of Student Services will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that Student Services meet the needs of a diverse student body.
- The provision of services as appropriate that are welcoming and inclusive to all.

The Director of Estates & Campus Services will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the physical environment is accessible where possible.

The Dean of Teaching and Learning will be responsible for:

- Ensuring equality, diversity and inclusive practice are embedded within
- University strategies for teaching and learning.

The Head of Research Services will be responsible for:

- Ensuring equality, diversity and inclusive practice are embedded within University strategies for research.

The Head of Admissions will be responsible for:

- Students will be admitted according to the University Admissions Policy (see section 7.1 below).

Equality, Diversity, & Inclusion Staff Board

An Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Staff Board, chaired by Director of HR, is the body tasked with the strategic management of the Staff EDI Programme within St Mary's University. It will set the Staff EDI agenda across the University, oversee implementation and monitor progress on a regular basis. It will also provide oversight of Charters Programmes, currently including the Advance HE Athena Swan and the Race Equality Charters and the Disability Confident scheme. It will ensure that equality and diversity principles are fully embedded in the University going forward, so that the University can be held as an exemplar organisation in terms of its EDI achievements. The EDI Staff Board will report to the University Executive Committee. In addition to this, six staff network groups will meet regularly with their communities and allies and feed their actions and issues into the wider board. These six networks are the Women's Network, the BAME & Allies Network, the LGBTQ+ Network, the Disability Network, the Interfaith Network, and the Parents & Carers Network.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Student Group

An Equality & Inclusion Student Issues Group, chaired by Head of Widening Participation, will meet once a month during the academic year. The purpose of the Equality and Inclusion (E&I) Student Issues Group is to enhance, develop, support and participate in equality and inclusion (E&I) initiatives that help to fulfil St Mary's E&I objectives and positively impact an inclusive learning and teaching environment.

Responsibilities of St Mary's University Staff

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to comply with this Policy.

Staff should treat colleagues, students and visitors with respect.

Staff must seek advice from HR for issues about their employment.

Staff should seek guidance from Organisational Development (OD) or CTESS for guidance relating to student issues where they are unsure of their practice or would like additional training on key student-facing practices.

Staff seeking guidance on regulatory matters relating to students should seek guidance from the Head of Registry Services.

Disciplinary procedures may be invoked in the case of any breach of University policy on equality and inclusion by a University employee.

Responsibilities of St Mary's University Students

All students are required to treat fellow students, staff and visitors with respect regardless of their background. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedures.

Monitoring and Reporting

Annual reports showing activity and progress in relation to both staff and student equality, diversity and inclusion, will be considered by the University Executive Committee and then the Finance & Resourcing Committee of the Board of Governors.

The reports (one relating to staff and one to students) will include:

- The outcome of the monitoring in relation to the goals set in the People Strategy by the EDI Staff Board (for staff) and E&I Student Issues Group (for students);
- Specific measures adopted to promote equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Summary of cases of complaint or grievance relating to equality;
- Recommendations for the future priorities.

Publication of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement

Copies of this Policy Statement will be brought to the attention of all existing staff, to new employees of the University, be available in the Students' Union and on the University Portal.

Disabled Staff

The University will make reasonable adjustments to prevent a disabled person suffering a disadvantage compared with people who are not disabled. The University has made a commitment to the Disability Confident scheme, and strives to make its recruitment process as inclusive as possible, while also providing reasonable adjustments to new and existing members of staff with a disability or long-term health condition, as well as members of staff who acquire a disability or long-term health condition while working at St Mary's.

Student Administration

Procedures for the Admission of Students

All students will be admitted according to the University Admissions Policy and will be considered providing they have the potential to meet the requirements of the programme. Where interviews are held, either because of pressure on places or for statutory requirements, this will be undertaken in a culturally sensitive manner and at least two people will be involved in any decision.

Disabled Students

All students who declare a disability which requires support and/or adaptations should be invited to the University to discuss their requirements. Support and advice is provided to all disabled applicants. The Disability Service Manager will advise students and staff on the reasonable adjustments that will be required. The University will make appropriate arrangements for the teaching and assessment of disabled students and for meeting their requirements where it is reasonable to do so.

Learning, Teaching and Research

All research undertaken at the University must be in line with the Equality Act 2010 and with University policies on equality, diversity and inclusion.

We are committed to the principles of equality and inclusion as well as the elimination of discriminatory practices. Within this context the University seeks to ensure that individuals to whom this policy applies are:

- treated with respect and dignity
- find it possible to participate fully in the life of the University
- have equal access to opportunities so as to maximise their personal, academic and professional development.

Underpinning this approach is the principle that no individual will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, marital status, gender reassignment, racial group, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, socio-economic background, trade union membership, or any other irrelevant distinction. Our REF Code of Practice ensures selection for REF is underpinned by equality and inclusion.

Publicity and Marketing

The marketing and publicity activities, including those activities relating to student recruitment should be sensitive to diversity and individuals. Marketing materials and publicity should make reference to the University's Equality and Inclusion Policy Statement and should challenge stereotypes and promote positive role models. All publicity should be able to be made available in appropriate media.

Strategies will be devised to target under-represented groups to ensure that they are aware of the opportunities at the University and appropriate community organisations and other bodies will be used to promote such opportunities.

Use of Non-Discriminatory Language

The University will seek to use non-discriminatory language and images in all its internal and external documents, official publications and correspondence and other communications.

St Mary's University Committees

The membership and chairing of all internal University committees and other official bodies will be kept under review to ensure there is appropriate equality and diversity of representation.

Monitoring

The University will monitor applicants for posts, candidates selected for interviews, new appointments, current staff, and promotions to ensure that equality, inclusion and diversity are being promoted.

Monitoring will also take place for students in relation to applications, intake, withdrawals, and overall achievement to ensure that equality, inclusion and diversity are being promoted.

Equality Impact Assessment

The University will impact assess all new and revised policies which are identified as having a potential impact on equality. The impact assessment will accompany any new policy proposal.

Equality Charters

The University will uphold its commitment to external equality charters that help improve equality, diversity, and inclusion at an institutional level by appointing a senior member of staff to serve as a leadership sponsor for each charter. The University will seek to recognise the work of staff and students who contribute to the success of our equality charters work by providing workload relief and formalised recognition where possible.

Harassment

The University will ensure that staff and students are able to act if they feel harassed through appropriate Dignity at Work and Study policies. The implementation of these policies will be monitored.

Complaints and Grievances

The University will give a proper hearing through the appropriate grievance procedures, to complaints or grievances from any student or employee who alleges that he or she has been unfairly discriminated against.

Any representation from a job applicant will be investigated, reported to the Director of HR, and the applicant notified of the outcome.

Any complaint from a student applicant for programmes should contact the Head of Admissions.

Document Record

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Author	Lisa Bath, HR Policy and Projects Consultant
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Appendix A

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance quality of opportunity for all. Under the general equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, the University must have due regard to the need 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 Act lists 9 “Protected Characteristics”, as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

The University is under a legal duty under the Equality Act (as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty) to review and publish equality data each year.

Our specific duties underpinning the Public Sector Equality Duty include requirements to:

- Publish information about how our functions affect staff (and students) with different protected characteristics
- Set measurable equality objectives to meet the duty.

Further to the Equality Act 2010, The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 came into effect on 6 April 2017 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 came into effect on 31 March 2017. These relate to equal pay and gender pay gap reporting.