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# Equal Opportunities Policy

Version 2.0

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**September 2015**

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## **1. Policy statement**

1.1 London Waterloo Academy is committed to a policy of equal opportunities and recognises and accepts that it has a legal and moral obligation for the prevention and elimination of discrimination in any form.

1.2 This policy has been developed to enable the College to achieve its aim of promoting Equal Opportunities and achieving the strategic objective of *“attracting greater diversity”*.

## **2. Overall Aim of the Equal Opportunity Policy**

2.1 The aim of the Equal Opportunity Policy is to prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination in line with the Equality Act (2010).

## **3. The Objectives of the Equal Opportunity Policy**

3.1 To ensure that all staff and students will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religious belief, gender, and sexual orientation

3.2 To have due regard of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the Equality Act (2010)

3.3 To take ‘positive action’ in relation to the recruitment, training and development of staff

3.4 To create a learning environment within which all members of the community can fully realise their individual potential.

3.5 To identify opportunities to achieve improved equality through impact assessment

## **4. Protected Characteristics**

4.1 Discrimination is unequal or differential treatment which leads to one person being treated more or less favourably than others are, or would be, treated in the same or similar circumstances. Discrimination may be direct or indirect, and includes discrimination by perception and association.

4.2 The College acknowledges that there are nine specific areas (or protected characteristics) which are covered by equality and diversity guidelines and legislation.

### **Age**

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their age. Where this is indicated, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

### **Disability**

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Reasonable adjustments must be made to give the disabled person as much access to any services and ability to be employed, trained, or promoted as a non-disabled person

### **Gender reassignment**

The process of transitioning from one gender to another. It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the ground of gender re-assignment.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couple.

Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

### **Race**

Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

## **Religion and belief**

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

## **Gender**

A man or a woman. It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the grounds of sex. Sexual harassment of men and women can be found to constitute sex discrimination.

## **Sexual orientation**

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes. It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their sexual orientation.

## **5. Harassment**

5.1 This occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

## **6. Victimisation**

6.1 This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have brought or intend to bring proceedings or they have given or intend to give evidence.

## **7. Complaints**

7.1 London Waterloo College will respond positively to constructive criticism and to any complaint that relates to harassment, discrimination and equality of opportunity.

7.2 LWA will endeavour to provide an environment that is supportive for those who want to make claims of harassment and discrimination.

7.3 LWA has an informal and formal procedure for students and staff, to resolve complaints.

## **8. Staff Recruitment, Training and Development**

8.1 Under the Equality Act (2010), positive action in recruitment and promotion applies as of 6 April 2011. 'Positive action' means the steps that The College can take to encourage people from groups with different needs or with a past record of disadvantage or low participation, to apply for positions within the organisation.

## **9. Impact Assessment**

9.1 Impact assessment ensures that the College's decisions and activities do not disadvantage any employee or student and also identifies opportunities to actively improve equality. The College will undertake impact assessments on its policies, procedures, processes and practices.

9.2 The information gathered in monitoring activities will be used in impact assessment to identify areas of adverse impact. Relevant representative groups will also be consulted to get a wide source of evidence when assessing for impact.

9.3 The Staff and Student Welfare Committee will take responsibility for monitoring the timescales and mapping of existing policies, procedures, processes and practice for impact assessment.

9.4 Any actions resulting from impact assessment will be included in the College Action Plan where relevant.

## **10. Recruitment and Selection**

10.1 Those responsible for recruiting and selecting candidates are advised to attend the London Waterloo Academy Recruitment and Selection seminars. Training and guidance will be provided on good selection practice with particular reference to equal opportunities considerations.

## **11. Working Arrangements & Environment**

11.1 Subject to operational requirements, London Waterloo Academy will give sympathetic consideration to members of staff whose personal circumstances change and will attempt to accommodate these by varying working arrangements, retraining or redeployment, wherever possible. London Waterloo Academy is committed to developing and maintaining a working environment which encourages all members of staff to contribute fully to the life and work of the College, which is supportive of the dignity and self-esteem of individuals, and which ensures that they are free from harassment.

## **12. Student Enrolment**

12.1 LWA welcomes applications from students with particular learning and support needs and will seek to ensure they have equal opportunity to fulfil their potential. The College invites all potential applicants to discuss the details of their requirements with staff and will endeavour to make all reasonable efforts to enable the applicant to benefit from and succeed within the college

### **13. Responsibility**

13.1 LWA staff and students are responsible for their actions and It is their duty to avoid discriminatory practices and to discourage others who may engage in discriminatory activities.

### **14. Staff and Student Welfare Committee**

14.1 London Waterloo Academy's Staff and Student Welfare Committee considers issues relating to equal opportunities. This is also a forum through which students through their Student Representative and employee representatives can be consulted on equal opportunities issues.

### **15. Implementation**

13.1 The Chairperson of the Staff and Student Welfare Committee has overall responsibility for the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the policy which is approved and supported by London Waterloo Academy. The Academy is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this policy is effective by:

- Advising the London Waterloo Academy senior management and other appropriate members of staff and committees of the London Waterloo Academy in matters of equal opportunities in employment;
- Providing training and/or guidance in the equal opportunities policy and those provisions, relevant to their responsibilities, and via the Equal Opportunities Legislation detailed below.
- Stating on relevant material that it is an equal opportunities employer;
- Ensuring that all material will be consistent with the London Waterloo Academy equal opportunities policy;
- Issuing each member of staff with a copy of this statement;
- Including a reference to the equal opportunities policy in terms and conditions of employment and asking new employees to confirm that they have read and accepted the policy as part of their terms and conditions of employment.

### **16. Review**

16.1The Principal will report annually to the London Waterloo Academic Board having taken the advice of the Chairperson of the Staff and Student Welfare Committee.

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