



MacIntyre Academies

Equal Opportunities Policy

Person Responsible:	Head of Academy Support & Development
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Date reviewed:	
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Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out MacIntyre Academies' commitment to providing equality and fairness for all and ensuring as far as possible that that no employee or potential employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. This policy outlines the rights and responsibilities of both MacIntyre Academies and its employees in accordance with relevant employment legislation and best practice.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of MacIntyre Academies Trust ('MAT' or 'MacIntyre Academies') in either a permanent, fixed term, relief or temporary post.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following MAT policies: 'Recruitment, 'Recruitment of Ex-Offenders' 'Grievance,' 'Disciplinary,' 'Bullying & Harassment,' 'Pay' and 'Appraisal.'

This policy doesn't form part of any contract of employment and may be amended from time to time.

3. Schedule of Responsibilities

The CEO of MacIntyre Academies Trust takes overall responsibility for the implementation of policies and procedures and to provide reports as appropriate to Trustees in relation to this policy.

Principals of MacIntyre Academies and their Senior Leadership Teams will take active steps to promote good practice under this policy and review and monitor the management and implementation of this policy and practice in their Academy. They will identify training needs, ensuring competence in those staff who are responsible for and involved in the operation of this policy.

All employees are required to cooperate fully and positively with the requirements of the Equal Opportunities Policy. They should ensure they know the standards of expected of them in relation the policy, seeking clarification where required and undertake any training recommended by their line manager.

MacIntyre Academies Human Resources are responsible for providing advice and training under this policy and reviewing and updating the policy as required; ensuring continuing relevance and effectiveness in line with any developments in employment legislation, good employment practice and other MacIntyre Academies policies. The HR and Recruitment Manager is responsible for collating data for regular Trust Board HR reports and where appropriate, providing confidential reports as required by the CEO and MacIntyre Academies Trust Board on individual cases.

4. Introduction

MacIntyre Academies is an Equal Opportunities Employer and is committed to positively promoting equality of opportunity, eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity among the workforce.

MacIntyre Academies' Equality Objectives are published on the MAT website and reviewed annually in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Statements for each MacIntyre Academy/School can also be found on the MAT website.

5. Policy Statement

MacIntyre Academies is dedicated to creating a positive working environment where everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and respect. MacIntyre Academies will not tolerate unfair or unlawful discrimination or harassment or bullying in any form.

The essential principles of this policy are:

- A positive working environment in which individual differences and contributions of all employees are recognised and valued will be actively promoted and all employees and prospective employees will be treated with dignity and respect.
- Training will be compulsory for employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers covering the prevention of discrimination. Information relating to Equal Opportunities will be contained within the Induction Programme for new employees.
- Training, development and progression opportunities will be made available to all employees. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of performance 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.
- Standard working practices and processes and procedures in place will be regularly reviewed to ensure the prevention of unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline, dismissal and selection for redundancy.
- Breaches of equality will be challenged and thoroughly investigated and where relevant will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures for employees.

6. Recruitment

Robust recruitment and selection procedures in place will be regularly reviewed to eliminate discrimination with the recruitment process. A Person Specification and Job Description is required for each vacancy, the content of which must be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the role. Shortlisting must be carried out independently by a panel of at least two persons (at least one of whom has undergone mandatory recruitment training detailing the prevention of discrimination). Equal opportunity data disclosed by potential candidates at the application stage is only accessible by Human Resources and is not made available to the recruitment panel.

Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the role and using the MacIntyre Academies' competency based framework. Pre-commencement questionnaires detailing any health conditions the candidate may have will not be required to be completed by applicants until an offer of employment has been made. Thereafter, MacIntyre Academies' will work with the applicant, to implement any required reasonable adjustments, wherever possible.

7. Training, Development and Progression Opportunities

Training, development and progression opportunities will be made available to all employees. 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.

8. Pay and Reward

Opportunities to undertake additional responsibilities that merit (or may merit) additional remuneration will be published within the school and open to all employees. The principles of equal pay for work of equal value will be applied. Salaries for new starters are calculated using the MacIntyre Academies pay scale framework, based on competencies, qualifications and experience. Pay progression along the MacIntyre Academies pay scale is reviewed annually for all staff and is based upon performance criteria as detailed in the Appraisal Policy.

Employees will not be the subject of unfair discrimination in decisions on pay, promotion and remuneration; Pay levels, enhancements and promotions will be determined within an equal opportunities context, having regard to the Equality Act, 2010 and relevant legislation.

9. Training

Training is provided for employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers. This mandatory training is delivered by the HR and Recruitment Team and includes an overview of the protected characteristics as covered under the Equality Act, 2010 and prevention of discrimination throughout the recruitment process including direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, discrimination by association and discrimination by perception.

Equality information is also included in induction programmes and training will be provided to staff on the Equality Policy as required.

10. Monitoring

Data relating to the ethnic origin, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion/beliefs and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion) will be monitored and analysed on a regular basis. MacIntyre Academies will put into place an appropriate action plan to address any areas of concern identified as a result of the monitoring process.

Any information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.

11. Breaches of the Policy

Breaches of this policy by employees will be treated as misconduct, or in the case of serious breaches, gross misconduct. Where appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken, which could, in serious cases, lead to dismissal with or without notice.

Where an employee feels they have been discriminated against, they may raise a complaint informally with their line manager or with the HR & Recruitment Manager. Complaints, which are not resolved informally will be managed within the formal MAT Grievance or Bullying & Harassment procedures. Complaints by external person(s) or job applicants should be referred via the MAT Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

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Protected characteristics: A protected characteristic is a group which is protected from discrimination under equality legislation. The Equality Act 2010 covers nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

Direct discrimination

Where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant. In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination

Where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Discrimination by Association

Where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by Perception

Where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

Harassment

Where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Victimisation

Occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need for a complainant to compare his/her treatment with someone who has not made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act 2010. For example, if a blind employee raises a grievance that the employer is not complying with its duty to make reasonable adjustments, and is then systematically excluded from all meetings, such behaviour could amount to victimisation.