

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

## POLICY ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

**Title:** Equal Opportunities Policy

**Identifier:** LM\_4.2

**Date of Last Review:** June 2021

**Status:** Non-Statutory

**Committee:** Leadership

**Leadership Lead:** CEO/Principal

**Review Process:** Every two years

**Location:** Website

**Reviewed and approved:** June 2021

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY - STUDENTS

The Local Advisory Board (LAB) aims to provide an appropriate learning experience for all students, whatever their colour, origin, culture, gender, religion or ability. The Academy has high expectations of all students. It is the responsibility of all staff to educate against any form of prejudice or negative stereotyping and to ensure that their conduct with students and colleagues reflects this responsibility at all times.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that:

- planning, language, questioning and classroom management includes and engages all students;
- suitable resources are chosen which aim to motivate, and are sensitive to different groups, cultures and backgrounds;
- stereotypes are effectively challenged;
- they are aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.

Senior leaders are responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place to monitor the performance of potentially disadvantaged students. Measures would include:

- identifying and investigating any patterns with regard to exclusions and poor attendance in respect of particular groups;
- monitoring differences in student attitudes to work and towards each other, with a view to identifying any relevant patterns;
- addressing issues such as sexual or racial harassment, bullying and hostile behaviour and ensuring that there are effective procedures for reporting and responding to such incidents;
- ensuring that the performance of different groups of students is monitored and evaluated so that the particular needs of different students are met;
- provide appropriate professional development to raise awareness of potential differences in need, and to promote strategies to raise achievement in all students;
- create an environment which affirms and supports ethnic, cultural, religious and social diversity.

### Equality of opportunities

In this policy, the term “parents” means all those having parental responsibility for a child. Where students have physical and/or learning disabilities, the Academy will ensure that:

- whatever arrangements are reasonable and practical, within financial constraints, are made to ensure that disabled students can gain access to the curriculum;
- the Academy works effectively with local services and agencies, providing coherent support.

With regard to gender, the Academy will ensure that guidance is given on subject choices and careers encouraging students to consider non-stereotypical opportunities. When inviting speakers and representatives into the Academy, and in the promotion of specific initiatives, the Academy will always ensure these are positive role models.

With regard to Minority Ethnic Groups, including Refugees, the Academy will ensure that:

- home - school links are made to involve parents directly in the work of the Academy
- linguistic diversity is positively recognised
- interpretation and translation services are made available as quickly as possible
- links are established with the local community
- learning support for ethnic minority students is efficient and effective
- provision is made for the spiritual, moral, and social and cultural education, supported by appropriate resources and information
- student names should be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced

All forms of discrimination by any person within the Academy will be treated seriously. A careful note of such incidents should be made, whether they take place in the Academy community, corridors or teaching areas. It should always be made clear to offending individuals that such behaviour is unacceptable. Racist symbols, political symbols or other biased and/or offensive insignia are forbidden in the Academy. The display of such materials is regarded as discriminatory behaviour. Discriminatory behaviour of any kind will lead to appropriate sanctions as per the Behaviour Policy.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY - STAFF

### Summary

GEMS World Academy (GWA) celebrates diversity and is proud of its multi-racial, multi-cultural, multilingual staff and students. We therefore adopt a positive and proactive approach to equal opportunities and use positive strategies to ensure all staff and students are supported and able to maximise their potential and achievement.

The LAB of the Academy is committed to supporting the creation of an environment that will:

- eliminate unlawful, direct and indirect discrimination and promote equality of opportunity
- ensure no employee or job applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of a “protected characteristic” as defined in the UAE Anti-discrimination law, [Federal Decree Law No. 2 of 2015](#), including, but not limited to; race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability etc.
- have regard to the provisions of the [Federal Decree Law No. 2 of 2015](#) and their impact upon employment

- make every effort to eradicate racial, religious or sexual harassment or discrimination, and prohibit harassment on the grounds of age
- value, celebrate and learn from the cultural diversity of its staff
- ensure that all employment decisions are made without reference to irrelevant or discriminatory criteria

The Academy has adopted the Equal Opportunities Policy as a means of helping to achieve these aims. This policy should be read in the context of any other relevant Academy policies.

### **Discrimination**

Direct discriminatory behaviour occurs where an existing or potential employee is put at a disadvantage because of a relevant characteristic as listed above in relation to their employment. Even if not intentional, the outcome of such behaviour may still be directly discriminatory.

Indirect discrimination occurs where employment is subject to an unjustified condition which puts those sharing one of the characteristics listed above at a particular disadvantage, albeit that on the face of it the condition or requirement is 'neutral'. The Academy will maintain a neutral working environment in which no employee or worker feels under threat or intimidated.

### **The LAB**

The LAB are responsible for:

- Ensuring the Admissions Policy at the Academy does not discriminate against children seeking admission or with regard to how students are treated, on the grounds of the aforementioned "protected characteristics". This includes discrimination in provision of teaching or allocating the student to certain classes, applying different standards of behaviour, dress and appearance, excluding students or subjecting them to any other detriment, and conferring benefits, facilities or services
- Ensuring that the processes for recruitment are applied to ensure that the Academy does not discriminate in the employment of staff on grounds of the aforementioned "protected characteristics." This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices such as dress codes and disciplinary procedures
- Ensuring any complaint regarding appointments and admissions will be fully investigated, recorded and acted upon
- Ensuring that the Academy records racist incidents and reports them to the external authority where necessary
- Ensuring that the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Reporting Policy places emphasis on equal entitlement to a broad curriculum for all students across all grades

- Ensuring that all students are entitled to take part in the full range of Academy activities and that students are not discriminated against due to restricted finances

### **Staff**

All staff will be responsible for adhering to and implementing this policy. They will deal promptly and firmly with any incidents of discrimination, recognise and tackle racial bias and stereotyping; promote equal opportunities and good race relations, and avoid discrimination against anyone for reasons associated with any of the aforementioned “protected characteristics”.

### **The Workforce**

The Academy will ensure no employee receives less favourable treatment than others and that appropriate support is provided so that all employees attain their full potential to the benefit of the Academy and themselves.

The Academy wishes to achieve an ability-based workforce which is in line with the working population mix in the relevant labour market.

The cooperation of all members of staff is essential for the success of this policy. However, the Principal / CEO and the LAB has lead responsibility for achieving the aims of this policy, and for ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation and Codes of Practice. Behaviour or action against the spirit or the letter of the aims on which this policy is based will be considered a serious disciplinary matter and may lead to dismissal.

### **Positive Action**

Underrepresented groups should be encouraged to apply for training and employment opportunities within the Academy. Recruitment to all advertised jobs will be strictly on merit.

Wherever necessary, use should be made of lawful exemptions to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular groups, or those comparatively underrepresented in certain positions across the Academy.

Efforts should be made to identify and remove unnecessary and unjustifiable barriers, and to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the needs of underrepresented groups.

### **Recruitment & Selection**

#### **Principles**

- The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any Equal Opportunities Policy. We will, through appropriate training, ensure employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making appointment decisions

- Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy
- Job descriptions will be drafted in such a way so as to ensure they are in line with our Equal Opportunities Policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any person specifications and be limited to only those necessary for the effective performance of the job
- We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies
- We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group
- All applicants who apply for jobs with the Academy will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job
- All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate
- Shortlisting and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person at all times
- Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job, conducted on an objective basis and will not be of a discriminatory nature
- We will not disqualify any applicant because he or she is unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job
- Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff

### **Vacancy Advertising**

The Principal / CEO and/or the LAB shall put in place arrangements to determine which vacancies must be advertised both internally and externally simultaneously. It is anticipated that senior posts would always be advertised externally where appropriate.

Steps should be taken to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches under-represented groups internally and, where appropriate, externally.

Wherever appropriate, vacancies should be notified to relevant job centres, careers offices, and colleges as well as to minority press, media and organisations.

All vacancy advertisements should include a short statement on equal opportunities.

We will ensure this policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for our recruitment and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and made known to all applicants for employment.

### **Selection**

Selection criteria, including job descriptions and person specifications, should be kept under review to ensure they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job.

Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in the shortlisting, and the selection interview. All staff involved in the recruitment process should receive training in equal opportunities.

Reasons for selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies must be recorded.

### **Training and Promotion**

Senior staff and middle leaders will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure they are aware of its contents and provisions and are capable of implementing the provisions contained therein to eliminate discrimination or harassment and actively promote equality of opportunity.

### **Personnel Records**

Access to personal records is restricted in accordance with the provisions of the Academy's Data Protection Policy as detailed in the section 'Subject Access Request'.

### **Enforcement**

All employees have a right to equality of opportunity and a duty to implement this policy. Breach of the Equal Opportunity Policy is potentially a serious disciplinary matter. Anyone who believes that he or she may have been disadvantaged on discriminatory grounds is entitled to raise the matter through the Academy's grievance procedure.

This policy will be communicated to all private contractors reminding them of their responsibilities towards the equality of opportunity.

This policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.

### **Equality Impact Statement**

The Academy will do all it can to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, directly or indirectly. The general equality duty sets out the equality matters that the Academy needs to consider when making decisions that affect staff with different protected characteristics. This duty has three elements. In carrying out its functions the Academy is required to have 'due regard' when developing policies and making decisions by the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the [Federal Decree Law No. 2 of 2015](#)
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The duty applies to all areas of discrimination listed in the [Federal Decree Law No. 2 of 2015](#).

On review the Academy will assess the likely impact of its policies on the promotion and advancement of equality and opportunity and cohesion.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

We will maintain and review the employment records of all our employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy. Monitoring may involve;

- the collection and classification of information regarding race in terms of ethnic/national origin, gender and age of all applicants and current employees;
- the examination by ethnic/national origin and gender of the distribution of employees and the success rate of the applicants; and
- recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions

The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff. The LAB will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness giving due consideration to any legislative changes across this timeframe. The policy will be promoted and published throughout the Academy.