

DIVERSITY, DIGNITY AND INCLUSION

"I speak not for myself but for those without voice... those who have fought for their rights... their right to live in peace, their right to be treated with dignity, their right to equality of opportunity, their right to be educated."

— Malala Yousafzai

Preamble

1. As a College, we believe that:
 - everyone has the right to be respected and valued for who they are and what they believe;
 - respect is shown through listening to every voice (yours and others) and actively promoting inclusion in society, institutions and debate; and
 - the diversity made through active inclusion is vital to support the dignified and thriving individuals that are at the heart of a healthy and vibrant community.
2. Therefore, as a common standard for all our work we must ensure that staff, students and the rest of society recognise, value and promote inclusion in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.
3. We will ensure that all who are subject to our policies and regulations are treated fairly and not less favourably on any unnecessary grounds, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race (caste, ethnic or national origin, nationality or colour), religion or belief, sex (gender), sexual orientation, or caring responsibilities.

Principles

4. The College is a vibrant place to study and work, enriched by the diversity of perspectives, cultures and backgrounds brought by its students, staff, visitors and local communities. We are committed to sustaining an effective place for work and learning where fairness, equity and diversity are highly valued.
5. We seek to create an inclusive and supportive place for work and learning for students, staff, contractors and visitors that is free from discrimination – unnecessary, unfair or unlawful – and where all can participate and where all have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.
6. Every member of our community can contribute to making this vision a reality: where equity, diversity and dignity are embedded in all we do, and all places on and off campus where we do our work are free from harassment, bullying and discrimination.

Our commitments

7. We will treat all individuals with dignity and respect, ensuring we provide a positive working, learning and social environment which is open to all regardless of background and personal circumstances.
8. We will work towards the elimination of unnecessary, unfair, and unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation based on difference, protected characteristic, or other status including background or personal circumstances.

9. We will take an evidence-based approach to underpin our plans for equity, diversity and inclusion.
10. We will collect, store and publish equalities information appropriately, while protecting the confidentiality of personal information.
11. We will conduct equality analysis on our policies, practices and procedures as a way of identifying potentially adverse effects. We will explore means of mitigating them.
12. We will produce and publish equality objectives aligned to the needs of our business that actively seek to eliminate disadvantage and promote inclusivity.
13. We will make reasonable adjustments, wherever possible, for students and staff in line with identified needs. For students, we will anticipate meeting their needs and try to make whatever adjustments are reasonable and feasible.

Responsibilities of staff and students

14. To continually develop dignity and inclusion, staff and students have a duty to ensure that all their academic endeavours – teaching, learning, research and scholarship – are:
 - (a) mindful of the need to develop our inclusive culture and remove obstacles to equity
 - (b) leading and supporting the College in creating an inspirational, inclusive and diverse place of work and learning;
 - (c) building a culture in which equity and diversity considerations are embedded into their work areas;
 - (d) flexible in how they engage with stakeholders, ensuring everyone takes suitable account of other views;
 - (e) advancing equality of opportunity between all people, but particularly those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
 - (f) fostering good relations between all people, but particularly those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - (g) ensuring that staff and students are encouraged and enabled to reach their full potential.

Breach of the code

15. The College takes seriously any instances of students, staff, contractors or visitors not keeping to the code. We will investigate such instances and, if appropriate, consider them under the relevant disciplinary policy and procedures.
16. We strongly encourage informal and local resolution of issues or complaints. This is why we provide 'dignity and respect contacts' and a mediation service to support staff and students.
17. If appropriate, all student and staff complaints about policy breaches should first be raised at a local level with a view to informal and timely resolution. If these attempts fail or are inappropriate because of the nature of the policy breach, then:
 - (a) students who believe there has been a breach regarding our provision of a service or facility may raise it through the Student Concerns and Complaints policy;

- (b) students who believe there has been a breach in our academic processes may use the Academic and Regulatory Appeals policy;
 - (c) instances of breaches by students may be investigated under the Student Behaviour and Discipline policy;
 - (d) employees who believe there has been a breach may raise it through the Grievance policy and procedure; or
 - (e) contractors or other visitors who believes there has been a breach may raise it in writing to a Senior Officer.
18. Support is available for students and staff who invoke these procedures. For students, support is available from the Students' Union. For staff, advice and guidance is available from their Head of Department or the HR Team.
19. If a breach of the criminal law occurs, the College must, where appropriate, help the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service. Regarding any criminal charges, the College may not, unless a Senior Officer decides otherwise, proceed with any disciplinary proceedings on the same matters until any criminal proceedings finish.

Legal and regulatory context

Equality Act 2010

20. Our policy conforms to relevant equalities-related legislation, in particular the Equality Act 2010 (the 'Act'). While the College is not subject to the Act's public-sector equality duty, it has due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Schedule (not part of the policies and regulations):

Responsible Officer: Provost

Approved by: Board of Directors and Academic Board and GSM London Students' Union

Version: 1.0

Date: 24 February 2016

Monitoring and Review Body: Academic Board and GSM London Students' Union

Effective From: 1 April 2016

Next Scheduled Review: April 2017