



Minerva
Learning Trust

Equality and Diversity Policy

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Changes to this edition

First edition.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to confirm Minerva Learning Trust commitment to equality and to valuing diversity as an employer and a provider of education. It also outlines the fair employment practices and monitoring processes that we are committed to putting into place to support this.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, potential employees, supply staff, agency staff, volunteers, contracted staff, Trustees, Members and members of the local governing bodies. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the General Equality Duty Statement and specific agreed plan that is in place for each School and Central Team.

Other related policies:

- Disciplinary Policy;
- Grievance Policy;
- Bullying and Harassment Policy;
- Recruitment and Selection Policy (including for Safer Recruitment);
- Staff Dress Code.

3. Commitment

3.1 Valuing Diversity

Minerva Learning Trust is committed to building a workforce which reflects diversity from the communities it serves and values the contributions from all staff from a wide range of different backgrounds. We actively seek to promote an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and where all staff and students are encouraged to fulfil their full potential.

It is our policy to promote equality to all irrespective of:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Sexual orientation;
- Race (including nationality; ethnic or national origin);
- Gender (including gender reassignment);
- Marital Status including civil partnership;
- Domestic circumstances;
- Carer responsibilities;
- Religion or belief;
- Trade union membership.

3.2 Equality and Diversity

Minerva Learning Trust seeks to be an equal opportunities employer and is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. We are determined to ensure that:

- Everyone working in or coming into contact with the Trust is treated fairly and not discriminated against on any of the above grounds;
- Our employment practices comply fully with current equalities legislation and associated codes of conduct. Decisions on recruitment and selection, promotions, training and any other benefit is made objectively, without unlawful discrimination and based upon objective criteria;
- We will aim for our workforce, including volunteers, to reflect the diverse society which we serve and provide a working environment free from any form of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or victimisation.

We recognise that the provision of equality of opportunity in all our activities will benefit the Trust. Our policy will help all staff to develop to their full potential and the talents and resources of staff will be utilised fully to maximise the effectiveness of the work of the Trust.

All employees are expected to co-operate fully with this policy and any member of staff found to have committed an act, or acts, of discrimination or harassment will be dealt with under the Trust Disciplinary Policy. Proven discrimination or harassment will lead to summary dismissal.

4. Equality Commitment

4.1 Recruitment & Selection

All recruitment will be carried out in accordance with Minerva Learning Trust Recruitment and Selection Policy which is aimed at ensuring that the most suitable candidate is appointed fairly to the job.

All advertisements will state the Trust's values equality and diversity. Selection will be based on objective and job-related criteria and the successful candidate will be chosen on his/her merits and abilities.

Applicants will be asked to complete a Diversity, Equality and Inclusion form as part of their application. This information will be separated from the application form and will be used for monitoring purposes only and will play no part in the selection process.

Our recruitment and selection practices comply with all appropriate employment law legislation and will be amended to reflect any subsequent legislative changes.

4.2 Nationality and Immigration Act 2006

In order to comply with the provisions of this Act, we will take steps to ensure all staff are eligible to work in the United Kingdom. Successful candidates will be asked to produce original and specified documents(s) before a confirmed offer of employment is provided.

4.3 The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

In order to safeguard and protect the welfare of all the students in our care, we will ensure safe recruitment practices are followed. As such all employees, agency workers, contractors, volunteers, casual and supply staff will be required to provide relevant information for the Trust's safeguarding register to confirm their suitability to work with children.

4.4 Conditions of Service

The Trust's terms and conditions of employment will be monitored to ensure that they are consistent with the equality and diversity statement.

4.5 Human Resource Policies and Procedures

Human Resources policies and procedures will be reviewed regularly to improve, amend or adapt current practices to promote equality of opportunities at the Trust. Human Resources Policies will be applied consistently and fairly to all staff.

In addition, employees of the Trust have access to range of policies which are designed to support and encourage flexibility and diversity in the workplace.

4.6 Staff Training and Development

All employees will have access to development opportunities, promotion and training at the Trust.

All new employees will be provided with an induction pack which will include a reference to the Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy, as well as the Public Sector Equality Duty Statement and specific agreed plan that is in place for each School and Central Team.

5. Implementation

The Headteachers and Chairs of Governors have specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy at school level. The CEO and the Minerva Learning Trust Board of Trustees are responsible at corporate level.

We expect all employees to abide by the policy and help to create an equality environment.

In order to implement this policy, we shall:

- Communicate the policy to all staff through staff briefings;
- Ensure the policy is used as a means of raising and discussing the issues covered in this policy on a periodic basis to ensure that all staff remain fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity;
- Endeavour, through appropriate training, to ensure that it will not consciously or unconsciously discriminate in the selection or recruitment of applicants.

6. Monitoring & Review

The Trust will analyse the profile of its current workforce, job applicants and appointments to assist the effectiveness of the policy.

7. Complaints

Any breaches of the policy should be reported in the first instance to the Headteacher at School level and CEO at Minerva Learning Trust, who will carry out a full investigation or delegate this to another designated member of staff.