

REVIEW - JUNE 22, 2020



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Vogal Training is committed to promoting equality and diversity and a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work.

Vogal Training aims to be an inclusive organisation, where diversity is valued, respected and built upon, where students, staff, and other stakeholders are expected to behave in a way which makes people feel accepted, comfortable and safe.

The objective of this policy is to outline Vogal Training's approach to fulfilling this commitment and to make it clear to all parties what they may expect from Vogal Training and equally what Vogal Training expects of them.

2. Scope

The commitments within this policy apply to students, staff, volunteers and users of Vogal Training. The policy also forms the standards Vogal Training sets for work with other organisations and visitors with regards to achieving equality, for example work placements and employers, collaborative partners and contractors (both in terms of employment and as a service provision of skills education).

3. Context

This Equality & Diversity Policy reflects the harmonised and strengthened content and requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The Act (and this policy) identifies nine 'Protected Characteristics'. These are:

- Age: (older people, younger people, people of an age group)
- Disability: (not limited to physical or sensory impairments, mental health disability, some long-term medical condition)
- Gender reassignment: (transsexual people, transgender people)
- Marriage and civil partnerships: (a person who is married, a person who is a civil partner)
- Pregnancy and maternity: (pregnant women, women on maternity leave, women who have recently given birth)
- Race: (colour, nationality, ethnic or national backgrounds, heritage)
- Religion or belief: (any religion or lack of religion, any religious or philosophical belief or lack of belief)
- Sex: (women and men - gender)
- Sexual orientation: (gay and lesbian people, bisexual people, heterosexual people)

4. Strategy

Vogal Training will:

- Ensure the principles of equality and diversity are evident in all organisational policies, systems and practices and ensure that these do not unfairly disadvantage or discriminate individuals either directly or indirectly
- Create an environment which values differences, raises aspiration and provides an opportunity for everyone to achieve
- Value the different contributions made by students and staff and make use of their diverse backgrounds and experiences to enhance the service provided
- Encourage and foster good relations between people from different groups
- Actively encourage the recruitment of staff and students from all groups within the community

- Take positive action to promote equality of outcomes for students and staff
- Provide awareness raising, training and guidance for staff and students on equality and diversity issues
- Take disciplinary action against students or staff if the policy is deliberately or wilfully breached.

5. Responsibilities and compliance

(i) The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that:

- Positive action is taken to ensure that the management team reflects the diversity of the communities served by Vogal Training
- They are aware of and take ownership of Vogal Training's responsibilities as outlined in this policy and equality legislation, notably the Equality Act 2010
- Before making any major strategic decisions they consider equality issues in relation to students and staff
- Vogal Training Strategy encompasses the commitment to equality of opportunity
- The Quality Improvement Plan has equality at its core
- Vogal Training recruits and retains an inclusive and diverse workforce which is appropriately developed to ensure each individual has the opportunity to achieve their full potential and thus improving the performance of the whole organisation

(ii) Vogal Training Management Team is responsible for ensuring that:

- They promote this policy amongst their staff and ensure compliance
- That actions within their departments contribute towards Vogal Training meeting its duties
- All programmes of learning offered, whether existing or new, will be regularly reviewed through the SAR and course delivery planning processes to examine how far they meet the needs of all students with particular reference to equality of opportunity
- They take appropriate action where necessary to assist minority or underrepresented groups to increase participation, retention and achievement tailored to any patterns within programme areas (e.g. gender bias)
- Teaching observation reports include an evaluation of how successfully equality and diversity is embedded and advanced within each lesson

(iii) All staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- They are aware of this policy and duties in relation to all of the protected characteristics and Vogal Training's duties under the Equality Act and attend all mandatory Equality and Diversity Training
- They demonstrate sensitivity to issues of diversity and that they attend and complete staff training to help their understanding of the issues in this area
- Whatever their role, they challenge, within their ability, inappropriate behaviour of any person wherever it might occur within Vogal Training
- They conduct themselves throughout their employment in a way that positively supports this policy and protects Vogal Training's reputation and embraces the aim of "Valuing Diversity"

(iv) Students are responsible for ensuring that:

- They attend induction & tutorial activities and complete all mandatory training concerning equality and diversity and fulfil their responsibilities towards other students and members of staff
- Their coursework reflects sensitivity to issues of equality and diversity and does not include any discriminatory content
- They refer cases of inappropriate behaviour by any staff, visitors or fellow students to a member of staff, act as good role models to peers and challenge inappropriate behaviour where they are confident in so doing

5. Staff Development and Awareness

Vogal Training will provide periodic training and awareness raising to staff and students through:

- Appropriate Equality & Diversity induction
- Appropriate face to face and online Equality & Diversity training
- Providing informative materials and updates around the Training Centre (e.g. information notice boards), which embrace and promote Equality and Diversity
- Providing training to staff through staff development days, which will raise awareness and ensure that Equality & Diversity is embedded in everything we do

6. Implementation and Monitoring

As an employer, Vogal Training monitors and reviews the effectiveness of its Equality and Diversity policy:

- With the involvement and consultation of appropriate groups and stakeholders in its review and ongoing development
- By reviewing and implementing best practice

The policy is underpinned by Vogal Training's aim;

Achieving Student Success through Valuing Diversity

- Treating everyone with respect
- Valuing the richness diversity brings
- Appreciating others' differences
- Challenging unacceptable or unfair treatment
- Treating others as you would want to be treated