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## Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure

**Policy Adopted January 2012**

**Revised August 2016**

**Revised May 2020**

**Revised August 2022**

**Next revision date August 2024**

NESWEC intends to be a truly open, accessible and diverse organisation and is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment and education regardless of a person’s gender, race, sexual orientation, age, disability or religious belief or other specific factors which result in discrimination.

To achieve this, we need to ensure that none of our policies and procedures places any unnecessary barriers for students or staff.

All NESWEC staff and students have a personal responsibility for the implementation of this policy

NESWEC will endeavour to ensure that the following good practice informs the actions of staff and students.

* NESWEC seeks to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment for everyone in relation to all its activities.
* NESWEC recognises the existence of discrimination and is committed to making changes in any area of NESWEC’s practice where there is evidence of failure to provide an appropriate and professional service.
* NESWEC will work actively towards eliminating discrimination, harassment and bullying because of race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, religion, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age, or any other grounds.
* In the event that staff or students are alleged to be in breach of NESWEC’s Equality and Diversity policy, an investigation will be carried out in accordance with agreed procedures. Depending on the outcome, guidance, advice, counselling and training may be offered to ensure compliance. In the event of serious or repeated breaches NESWEC’s disciplinary procedures will be applied. A serious breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure may constitute gross misconduct.
* NESWEC operates within a set of agreed equal opportunities definitions, which can be found as an Appendix to this Policy
* NESWEC has an Anti-Racism Statement which can be assessed through our home page [www.heswec.org.uk](http://www.heswec.org.uk) This is a working document and should be regularly reviewed.

**Procedural Objectives**

NESWEC will work actively to make progress in five key areas:

**Discrimination**

Eliminating any discrimination in relation to staff, student and NESWEC employee recruitment and promotion, the purchase of goods and services, and in the content, delivery and management of the curriculum

NESWEC will ensure that its equality and diversity policy is publicised as widely as possible to its community, including students, volunteers and staff.

**Harassment**

Ensuring that all students, staff and visitors can go about their business in an atmosphere free of intimidation or abuse

NESWEC will review the effectiveness of procedures, so that staff and students feel confident to raise issues of concern about equal opportunities, and to make complaints about discrimination, harassment or bullying.

**Widening Participation**

Encouraging maximum access to the full range of educational provision of all social backgrounds and cultures

This includes monitoring patterns of admissions and working to ensure that the admissions process is based only on student needs and aptitudes.

**Inclusive Learning**

Providing support, whereever possible, to enable individual students of different abilities and needs to progress through the curriculum towards successful achievement

NESWEC will monitor and review the curriculum, and the learning resources used to deliver the curriculum, to ensure that they reflect and promote equal opportunities.

**Celebrating Diversity**

Recognising and reflecting the positive contributions of people of different social backgrounds, cultures, religions, abilities, ages and sexual orientation.

NESWEC will ensure that marketing strategies reflect equal opportunities good practice and that NESWEC’s programme is actively and appropriately promoted.

**Responsibilities**

The Core Tutors are responsible for ensuring that a policy of equal opportunities is continuously promoted and comprehensively implemented in all aspects of NESWEC’s operation

* promoting equal opportunities on behalf of NESWEC, and ensuring that effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of equal opportunities throughout NESWEC
* promoting, monitoring and implementation of all aspects of NESWEC Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure relating to the employment of staff

**Legislation**

The Policy reflects national legislation and guidelines as provided by The Equality Act 2010.

**Procedural Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Course Coordinator will monitor and evaluate the success of this policy, ensuring that it is made available to all staff and students and that it is reviewed at the set review date.

Key performance indicators will include:

* Age, ethnicity, gender and disability profile of NESWEC staff
* Age, ethnicity, gender, disability and profile of NESWEC students
* Numbers of complaints or grievances of harassment and discrimination
* Staff attendance at equal opportunities training events

**Equality and Diversity Policy Definitions**

**Equality**

This means by which disadvantage and discrimination is reduced and eliminated by legislation and positive action. Equal Opportunities aims to ensure that no group receives less favourable treatment by virtue of one’s skin colour, race, gender, ethnic origin, disability, age, religion, class or sexuality, thereby enabling all people to have equality of access to the provision of goods, services, facilities, premises and employment. It does not mean treating everyone the same.

**Diversity**

This is valuing people as individuals for moral, social and business reasons. Diversity in the workplace is harnessed to create a productive environment in which organisational goals are met. Recognising and reflecting the positive contributions of men and women of different social backgrounds, cultures, religions, abilities, ages and sexual orientation.

**Direct Discrimination**

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably, than another person is or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances. Apart from limited exceptions to the general prohibition of discrimination, direct discrimination is automatically unlawful, whatever the reason for it. There can be no justification for the difference in treatment.

**Harassment**

Harassment is defined as any conduct that is unwanted by the recipient or any such conduct that affects the dignity of any individual or group of individuals at work.

Harassment may be repetitive or an isolated occurrence against one or more individuals.

Harassment can be physical, verbal, non-verbal or bullying examples of which include unnecessary touching, unwanted physical contact, leering, personal remarks, verbal or written abuse, visual displays, coercion, isolation or non-co-operation.

**Indirect Discrimination**

This is when a condition is applied equally to all, but a considerably smaller proportion of people from one group than others can comply with it, and it cannot be justified as necessary.

**Positive Action**

The measures that employers may lawfully take to provide access to facilities that meet special needs in relation to education and training or welfare, or to train or encourage people from a particular racial group that is under-represented in particular work.

**Prejudice**

An opinion or feeling about people of a different group that is formed beforehand, without informed knowledge, thought or reason and which is likely to be sustained even in the face of evidence to the contrary.

**Racial Discrimination**

Less favourable treatment of an individual or group on account of their race, ethnic or national origins but not colour or nationality

Harassment on grounds of colour or nationality involves less favourable treatment and may constitute unlawful direct discrimination.

**Racism**

All attitudes, procedures and patterns – economic, social and cultural – whose effect, though not necessarily whose conscious intention, is to create, maintain and extend the power, influence and privilege of one group of people over another.

**Racialism**

An implicit set of negative beliefs about a racial or ethnic group than could result in offensive or violent behaviour towards members of a racial or ethnic group.

**Sexism**

All attitudes, procedures and patterns – economic, social and cultural – whose

effect, though not necessarily whose conscious intention, is to create, maintain and

extend the power, influence and privilege of one group of people over another.

**Sexual Discrimination** – Less favourable treatment of an individual or group on account of their gender or marital status (including civil Partnerships) or sexual orientation