



# GLOBAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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Responsible Office: Human Resources

POLICY

# GLOBAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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## Advancing global equality, diversity and inclusion (GEDI) across all our locations

### 1. GEDI POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 We are multinational with global reach. We know there are differences in the jurisdictions where we are present. What remains consistent is our commitment to respect all who make-up our Heriot-Watt community. This support of a #OneWatt experience across all our locations embraces equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of who we are and what we do; valuing and celebrating difference in all its forms.

### 2. KEY PRINCIPLES

What is GEDI?

- 2.1 Global equality, diversity and inclusion (GEDI) describes our cross-jurisdiction commitment to progress where:

**Equality** focuses on ensuring fairness in access, treatment and delivery

**Diversity** recognises and celebrates difference, and

**Inclusion** supports engagement and encourages participation.

*Global Respect: Discrimination has no place at Heriot-Watt*

- 2.2 Everyone in our community has a role to play in how we bring GEDI into our everyday interactions. This means no one should have to experience or tolerate behaviour that is offensive, threatening, humiliating or intimidating no matter their role in our community, personal background or personal characteristics.
- 2.3 This means that:
- all reports of inappropriate conduct or behaviour will be taken seriously
  - all employees and students who report incidents of inappropriate behaviour will be fully supported
  - all allegations will be treated with the utmost seriousness and will be thoroughly and fairly investigated
- 2.4 This GEDI Policy is supported by the University's commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment for staff, students and visitors to work, study and visit. Heriot-Watt underpins this commitment through the four values, Inspire, Collaborate, Belong and Celebrate, with **Respect** the thread running through them all.

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**2.5** **Respect** has been developed in collaboration with our trades' union colleagues and aims to provide support and guidance for our staff and students. It outlines how we treat each other and build our flourishing community through our behaviours and actions.

**2.6** Respect ensures that we:

**Respect first** – by treating others with the level of respect that we expect

**Take responsibility for our actions** – recognising everyone is different and taking timely and appropriate action to address situations (when they arise) to put things right.

**Know how to report incidents** – in the event of a situation occurring that cannot be resolved at the time, use the channels available to report outlined at 4.7.

More information on Respect can be found on the [Respect Microsite](#).

**2.7** **The University is committed to taking appropriate action where an investigation upholds a complaint.**

### **3. GEDI ETHOS**

**3.1** Our GEDI Ethos is an expression of underlying principles which apply across the University community:

- We are values led.
- We accept the legitimacy of all cultures, recognising that no one culture is superior to another.
- Our behaviours and our expectations of others will be informed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>1</sup>.
- We encourage academic freedom, embracing freedom of expression across our community as we do across The Globe.

### **4. OBJECTIVES**

#### **GEDI Impact Intention**

**4.1** Our GEDI Policy has clear objectives for our community expressed in our GEDI Impact Intention, which is about how our community will be impacted by our GEDI Commitment.

Our commitment to advancing GEDI means our community will:

- feel and be safe,
- feel like they can count on us,

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<sup>1</sup> [www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf](http://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf)

- expect honest responses, and,
- be secure of no detriment as a result of personal circumstance.

### Embedding

- 4.2** This impact intention will be achieved by all functions of the University embedding GEDI into everyday business.
- 4.3** Policies and procedures cover all areas of University business across the learner, employer and researcher journeys. Embedding requires all 'functions' to embed appropriate GEDI requirements.

### Support

- 4.4** The University will support creating the impact intention and embedding through campus, function or central provision of:
- blended learning opportunities
  - awareness raising
  - briefings and guidance
  - supporting equality impact assessment.
- 4.5** We want to be clear that there will also be consequences for actions and or behaviours which are contrary to this policy. **There is no place for discrimination, harassment or victimisation at Heriot-Watt.**
- 4.6** Where instances occur we will:
- take all reports seriously
  - investigate instances *free from bias*
  - ensure that all investigating officers have been GEDI trained
  - take action when necessary.

### Reporting an incident

- 4.7** If you have an incident to report the following information will help you to find the best route for you.

#### [Report It](#)

This is the University's online reporting system which allows you to submit information confidentially, and if need be anonymously, in the event of unacceptable behaviour such as harassment, bullying or abuse of any kind.

#### [Student Complaints](#)

The University takes student complaints seriously with detailed and transparent processes outlined in detail on our webpages.

### [Staff Complaints](#)

Employee complaints processes are handled through the grievance procedures which include how the University responds to bullying and harassment.

You can also contact our [Respect Ambassadors](#) who maybe a helpful first point of contact.

## 5. SCOPE

- 5.1** This policy outlines the University's position on the embedding and promotion of GEDI. Specific policies and procedures are in place covering employees and students that should be referred to as necessary.
- 5.2** This policy is relevant across the entire University community. As such all staff, students, visitors, contractors, subcontractors and service providers along with any other persons associated with the functions of the University are responsible for ensuring that they adhere to this policy.
- 5.3** The University has campuses in Dubai, Malaysia and the UK. Our operating jurisdictions have different legal frameworks. **This policy statement applies across all areas of Heriot-Watt recognising local circumstances.**
- 5.4** To progress GEDI across all of the University this policy supports use of tools that will support meeting our strategic aims, fulfil our legal obligations and improve the experience of everyone in our community.

This policy therefore supports:

- use of positive action (for example developing specific bursaries for underrepresented groups in the student body)
- neutral language (for example limiting use of pronouns in documentation)
- self-declaration (for example all members of the University community are encouraged to disclose).

## 6. IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1** Implementation of the GEDI Policy depends on embedding the GEDI Ethos across all of Heriot-Watt. This means making sure that GEDI is part of how we approach all areas of activity covering all functions of the University.
- 6.2** We have a shared responsibility to implement this policy. Staff, students, contractors, visitors, *anyone* who is part of the University community must behave in a manner that supports embedding GEDI.

- 6.3** To make this a reality the University will provide support where needed and take action to address behaviour and actions where necessary.
- 6.4** A range of guidance and procedural supporting documents will be available across the University to support implementation. Where necessary existing policies/processes/procedures will be amended to embed GEDI.

## **7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **7.1** Monitoring and evaluation covers a number of areas:

- what's required of the University
- developing and improving how we work
- measuring the impact of GEDI

### **7.2** What's required of the University?

There are a number of requirements placed on the University to report on the composition of the University community; staff and students. We may also share information based on business requirements with partners. We will never do this without consent and will always take steps to anonymise data. Any information relating to the equality and diversity of staff or students will be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and in line with the University's Data Protection Policy.

We use the data we hold for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

### **7.3** Developing and improving how we work

The phrase 'monitoring and evaluation purposes' means that we use the data we gather and hold to tell us about how we are working and to help us make improvements. The data we hold can help us to plan and inform decision-making.

### **7.4** Measuring the impact of GEDI

We want to know if our approach to GEDI is working so we will gather information and report via the GEDI Committee about our activities.

## **8. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FURTHER REFERENCE**

- 8.1** Our policies, procedures and functions outline why and how we undertake particular activities and as a result a range of policies and procedures are related to this policy and will have an impact on its implementation. Relevant policies for staff and students can be found at the links below.

#### **Staff Related :**

[www.hw.ac.uk/services/human-resources/human-resources-policies.htm](http://www.hw.ac.uk/services/human-resources/human-resources-policies.htm)

**Student Related:** <https://www.hw.ac.uk/uk/students/student-policies.htm>

## 8.2 Procedures

As above

## 8.3 Further reference, help or advice

[www.hw.ac.uk/equality](http://www.hw.ac.uk/equality)  
[equality@hw.ac.uk](mailto:equality@hw.ac.uk)  
[hrhelp@hw.ac.uk](mailto:hrhelp@hw.ac.uk)

This document is available in Alternative Format upon request.

British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact the University via the online BSL Video Relay Interpreting Service:  
<https://contactscotland-bsl.org/>

## 9. POLICY VERSION HISTORY

| Version No | Date of Approval | Approving Authority  | Brief Description of Amendment                                                                        |
|------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| V. 1       | APRIL 2023       | University Executive | Policy reviewed and updated in line with review cycle. Specifically outlines individual circumstances |

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