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1. INTRODUCTION

Equality and Diversity is enshrined in the University’s Charter and Statutes providing the foundations for our commitment to creating and maintaining a supportive environment which promotes equality of opportunity and dignity and respect across our University Community. This commitment is further embedded by ‘The Spirit of Heriot-Watt University’ which is encompassed in our 5 values:

Pursuing Excellence
Valuing and Respecting Everyone
Pride and Belonging
Shaping the Future
Outward Looking

This policy is in direct response to the Equality Act 2010. The Act protects a range of groups from unlawful treatment under the term ‘protected characteristics’ covering:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Act introduced an overarching Equality Duty on public authorities and those that carry out public functions. The Equality Duty requires the University to pay ‘due regard’ to:

1. Eliminating unlawful discrimination
2. Advancing equal opportunities (between people that share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it)
3. Fostering good relations (between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not).

2. PURPOSE

This Equality and Diversity Policy covers all those areas prescribed by the Act outlined above, overseeing the implementation of Heriot-Watt University’s positive attitude toward the promotion of equality and diversity alongside providing the underpinning rationale for activities across the University. This policy directs both compliance and proactive activities that relate to equality and diversity across the University.

3. OBJECTIVES

Our objectives are to:

- ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential; challenging inequality and less favourable treatment
- promote diversity and equality for students and staff, recognising and valuing the contributions of our diverse population
- clearly demonstrate our commitment to creating an inclusive environment, tackling discrimination and eradicating inappropriate behaviour across the University Community.
We will achieve these objectives by:

- ensuring we understand our legal obligations and engage positively with staff, students and representative groups to fulfil our legal requirements
- clear and consistent communication to staff, students and representative groups
- providing access to training and support for staff to enable them to understand how equality and diversity is relevant to their roles and assist them in fully mainstreaming equality and diversity into their everyday activities
- taking forward activities that meet our commitments and actively promote equality and diversity throughout the University Community.

4. SCOPE

There are a number of areas across the University that take a lead role in taking forward the functions of a Higher Education Institution. The purpose of this Policy is to draw linkages to those areas.

The University is committed to ensuring the best possible Student Experience for all new and existing students throughout their academic journey at Heriot-Watt University.

While all our functions take account of this Equality and Diversity Policy the following functions have some specific areas of responsibility;

Staff Related

- **Recruitment and Selection**: Good practice in recruitment and selection is at the core of achieving equal opportunities in employment. The University has developed policies and procedures to ensure that decisions on appointments are made wholly on the grounds of the candidate's abilities rather than on any other criteria that cannot be shown to be properly justifiable. Only those staff who have attended a training course, whether the in-house Recruitment and Selection course provided by Human Resources or one provided by another organisation approved by the Director of Human Resources, are permitted to Chair a Selection Panel or be involved regularly in recruitment interviews.

- **Equal Pay**: The University believes that staff should receive equal pay for like work. We are committed to undertaking equal pay audits and taking remedial action where necessary.

- **Performance Development and Review**: Heriot-Watt University operates Performance Development and Review for staff. Managers use this process to give feedback to individuals and provide clear guidance on their area of work. The PDR process provides a one-to-one opportunity for staff to raise issues of any kind with their line manager. PDR should highlight individual development and support needs around equality and diversity and ensure staff are clear of service and School equality and diversity related requirements.

- **Progression and Promotion**: The University is firmly committed to the principle that opportunities for advancement and promotion should be available equally to all members of staff. To this end it has developed policies and procedures, to ensure that the criteria used for advancement and promotion are fair and open, and that decisions are made consistently in accordance with these criteria. All staff involved in selection for progression and promotion, including relevant members of departments and promotion bodies, should
receive formal equal opportunities awareness training in order to help them
reach unbiased judgments.

- **Grievance Procedures:** Any staff who have concerns about unlawful
discrimination, harassment or bullying are advised to contact their HR Partner.
Should a staff member be in breach of this policy existing disciplinary
procedures will be enacted. More information is available at [www.hw.ac.uk/hr](http://www.hw.ac.uk/hr)

**Research**

- Staff with responsibility for research governance are responsible for ensuring
that research undertaken by the University does not contravene this policy.

**Student Related**

- **Admissions:** The University selects a based on merit, ability and potential. We
will ensure that no applicants are treated less favourably as a result of any
protected characteristic. The University will take steps to ensure that the
wellbeing of prospective students, visiting applicants, and enrolled students are
fully considered and that we meet legal requirements. Further information can
be found in our Admissions Policy.

- **Learning and Teaching:** We value the diversity of backgrounds and
experiences that students bring to our University community. As part of our
desire to ensure that the student experience is rewarding and supportive, we
will respond by meeting the needs of the diverse and changing student body.
We aim to ensure that all teaching, learning and assessment strategies are
equitable, undertaken with awareness of the different needs of students and
are able to foster academic and personal development. The University
recognises that where possible diversity should be encouraged and reflected
in the content of course, teaching methods and forms of assessment. The
Learning and Teaching Board has responsibility for overseeing learning and
teaching development across the institution. More information in contained
within the Learning and Teaching Strategy.

- **Student Support and Accommodation:** The welfare of all students of the
University is of the highest importance. Student Support and Accommodation
provide support, advice and information on accommodation, funding and a
range of personal and disability issues along with dedicated support for
International Students. The service will continue to ensure that the needs of the
diverse student community are met.

- **Student Complaints:** Every student of the University is required at all times to
be of good behaviour and to observe all Ordinances, Regulations, procedures
and rules. Details of the University’s Complaints Policy can be found at
[www.hw.ac.uk/registry/resources/complaint-policy.pdf](http://www.hw.ac.uk/registry/resources/complaint-policy.pdf)

**University-Wide**

- **Internationalisation:** The University is committed to growing our international
base. We already see ourselves as Scotland’s International University. Our
international reputation and focus is one of our main drivers for the diversity of
our institution. Ensuring the equal treatment of international members of our
University is paramount in terms of continued success with recruiting
international students, enhancing our international reputation.
• **Services and Facilities**: Services or facilities provided by, for or in association with the University, are aimed toward ensuring access for all student groups and individuals. This includes catering facilities, accommodation services, sports and exercise provision, retail and outlets, conference and social activities. All of these services and facilities aim to deliver in a manner that meets the needs of our diverse student population and eliminates unlawful discrimination.

• **Procurement**: The University’s Director of Estates and Building Services and the Procurement Officer are responsible for purchasing services. They take on responsibility for ensuring that contractors, suppliers and tendering organisations are aware of and comply with this policy.

• **Non-University Employees or Students**: Any visitors, contractors, subcontractors and services providers in breach of this policy will be seen to be in breach of their terms of business.

5. **LINES OF RESPONSIBILITY**

This policy is relevant across the University Community. As such all staff, students, and 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 the relevant sections of this Policy.

The Heriot-Watt University Court is the body with ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the University meets the commitments detailed in this Policy. The University Executive has responsibility for ensuring that the day-to-day management of the University takes cognisance of this Policy. The Learning and Teaching Board and the Research Knowledge and Exchange Board both have responsibility for ensuring that equality and diversity is fully considered within the Boards and filtered to relevant areas.

The Equality and Diversity Advisory Group reports to the Secretary's Board. The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the University’s legal obligations are understood and implemented across the institution. The Equality and Diversity Advisory Group have responsibility for ensuring that the Policy is understood and well communicated.

6. **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

We are obliged to collect information regarding the recruitment, retention and development of staff across the range of protected characteristics. Any information relating to the equality and diversity of staff or students will be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

We are committed to creating and maintaining a supportive environment which promotes equality of opportunity alongside dignity and respect, an environment where members of our community are confident and willing to disclose personal information referring to any of the protected characteristics.

Complaints of discrimination based on grounds of protected characteristics should be raised through relevant grievance procedures for staff or complaints procedures for students. Complaints regarding harassment or bullying should be raised in accordance with the Harassment and Bullying policy.
Monitoring and review of this policy will be owned by the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group. This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis to ensure compliance with legislation, effectiveness, and equality impact.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

The University is made up of a range of academic and professional services. These areas support individuals across the University Community and as such undertake particular activities that impact directly on equality and diversity. It is the responsibility of Heads of Professional Services/Schools to determine responsibilities within their areas with reference to this Policy, the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group and through input to the University’s Equality Scheme. They are responsible for promoting equality and diversity throughout their areas of activity including undertaking Equality Impact Assessments where necessary.

All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- comply with this Policy and co-operate with their Line Managers
- treat others with respect at all times
- participate in training and wider learning opportunities to assist the University in meeting its Equality Duty
- ensure behaviours and actions do not unlawfully discriminate and that they are not harassing or bullying others
- be accountable for their actions

All students have a responsibility to:

- treat others with respect at all times
- ensure behaviours and actions do not unlawfully discriminate and that they are not harassing or bullying others
- be accountable for their actions

All visitors, contractors, subcontractors, service providers and any other persons associated with the functions of the University have a responsibility to:

- treat others with respect at all times
- ensure behaviours and actions do not unlawfully discriminate and that they are not harassing or bullying others
- be accountable for their actions

Training and support will be provided for all staff to assist in the implementation of this policy. All staff are expected to undertake online Equality and Diversity training. Information on other training opportunities available can be found at www.hw.ac.uk/equality

Training for students will be provided where appropriate and linked particularly to Heriot-Watt Student Union Office Bearers.

Support for staff and students will be provided via the Equality and Diversity Advisor, relevant networking opportunities and through the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group. WebPages specifically focusing on Equality and Diversity will also provide up-to-date signposting information. Where necessary, support will also be sourced externally.
8. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FURTHER REFERENCE

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. Outlined below are those areas that are relevant to this policy.

Staff Related

- Adoption Leave Agreement
- Adoption Leave Statement
- Appointing new staff
- Appointing non-EU/UK Nationals - Guidance for candidates, employees and managers
- Declaration of Eligibility to work in the United Kingdom
- Capability Policy
- Certificate of Sponsorship - Interim Policy
- Childcare Vouchers Policy
- Childcare Vouchers FAQs
- Dependants Emergency Leave Policy
- Dignity at Work (pdf)
- Disability Policy
- Disciplinary Code, Procedures and Policy
- Early Retirement Policy
- Employee Relations Structure
- Employment Records
- Ethics Policy
- Fixed Term Contracts: 'Handling the Expiry of Fixed-term Contracts' (pdf)
- Fixed Term Contracts - ‘Policy on the Use of Fixed-term Contracts’
- Flexible Working
- Grievance Procedures
- Guidance on Engaging Self Employed/Consultants/Agency Staff
- Contract for Services Template
- Handling, Holding & Destroying Disclosure Information Policy
- Harassment and Bullying Policy (pdf)
- Intellectual Property
- Market Supplements
- Maternity
- Mental Health Policy & Procedures
- Parental Leave
- Paternity
- Pension Taxation Changes 2011
- Performance Management Policy
- Probationary Procedures
- Promotion procedures
- Public Disclosure
- RAE Equal Opportunities Policy
- RAE Selection Policy
- Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy
- Redeployment Policy
- Research Code of Conduct
- Retirement
- Stress Awareness Policy & Procedures
Technology Research Services - Related Policies
Intellectual Property, Confidential Information and Commercialisation

Student Related

www.hw.ac.uk/home/dir/70/student-policy-and-documents

Procedures

As above
Further reference

www.hw.ac.uk/equality

9. DEFINITIONS

N/A

10. FURTHER HELP AND ADVICE

www.hw.ac.uk/equality

11. POLICY VERSION AND HISTORY

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<tr>
<th>Version No</th>
<th>Date of Approval</th>
<th>Approving Authority</th>
<th>Brief Description of Amendment</th>
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<tr>
<td>V. 5</td>
<td>03.12.2013</td>
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