



Equality and Diversity Policy

Version:

FINAL

Author:

Director

Date Issued:

February 2019

Impact Assessment Completed

Yes

Date of Next Review:

February 2021

Equality Impact Assessment Form

The completion of the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will help us to ensure that our policies, procedures and practices do not discriminate or disadvantage people and also improve or promote equality.

In relation to: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

1. Please explain if you identified any inequalities or possible discrimination in the policy, procedure or practice?

No negative impact on any of the equality strands identified in the procedure.

2. If identified, how have you changed the policy, procedure or practice to remove or mitigate the inequality or discrimination?

Not Applicable

3. Any follow up actions required?

Not Applicable

1. Introduction

Swarthmore values diversity and is committed to promoting equal opportunities for all who work and study at Swarthmore and are involved in or benefit from the delivery of Swarthmore services.

This policy outlines Swarthmore's commitments to equality and diversity with the intention to respond to the spirit of relevant legislation as well as our legal duties. To this end, Swarthmore operates under the principles of equal opportunity and will not tolerate any form of behaviour or activity that discriminates without proper justification because of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Swarthmore recognises its role within the charitable and adult learning sector, which serves and draws on the talents and skills of a diverse population. Swarthmore seeks to employ a workforce, trustee council and student body which reflects this diversity, because we value the individual contributions of all people, and we are committed to drawing on the different perspectives and experiences of individuals who will add value to the way we operate.

2. Policy Principles

This policy is intended to enable Swarthmore to promote an environment in which equality can be developed and embedded in our practice and applies to all users of the Centre's facilities.

2.1 Swarthmore is committed to enabling all students and staff to achieve their potential and will not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity, national origin, social origin, financial status, HIV status, language, political beliefs, trade union membership, or unrelated criminal convictions.

2.2 We will promote equality of opportunity for all staff, students and our customers.

2.3 Our policy will be reflected in curriculum design and delivery, teaching and learning activities, information, advice and guidance, staffing, staff development and the interaction between staff, students and the general public.

2.4 Swarthmore will take all reasonable steps to ensure that those who provide services to or visit the Centre are aware of and observe the Equality and Diversity Policy of Swarthmore. It is the responsibility of the relevant internal contractor or host to ensure that providers/visitors behave appropriately towards all members of Swarthmore and that no discrimination takes place.

2.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with Swarthmore's policies and procedures.

3. Implementation – Principles into practice

This section of the policy sets out our commitment to equal opportunities and what we hope to achieve.

3.1 Widening Participation

- Effective targeting of disadvantaged groups.
- Employment of dedicated staffing – for liaison with communities, community development work, information, advice and guidance, curriculum development, management of new provision, facilitating access for people with disabilities/learning disabilities.
- Recruitment and development of staff from/with an understanding of targeted communities/diversity of needs of potential students.
- Involvement of volunteers from targeted communities.
- Involvement of community groups in planning for development of provision.
- Working with a range of organisations including professional bodies, statutory agencies, charities, community groups and the voluntary sector to identify and plan to meet needs.
- Making provision available in a range of locations including community centres and times of the week/day.
- Customising provision to address and meet diversity of needs.
- Developing a range of new programmes which successfully attract new students and offer progression to further learning, volunteering or into employment.
- Inclusion of specific initiatives e.g. targeting men and boys in Family Learning and other under-represented groups.
- Development of projects which celebrate diversity and lead to the development of a wider range of provision/greater diversity of approach within existing core provision.

3.2 Teaching and Learning

- Curriculum design that takes full account of access and inclusive learning strategies, progress and progression routes and acknowledges prior learning and experience.
- Resource materials which are free from or used to challenge discriminatory attitudes and practice.
- Mutually respectful tutor-student relationships characterised by negotiation and partnership.
- Identification of individual learning and support needs through effective initial assessment and subsequent differentiated learning.
- Student induction in which principles of equality of opportunity are clearly explained. Students need to know what they should do if they encounter discrimination, harassment or victimisation. They should understand the complaints and appeal procedures and be fully aware of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and the consequences of that behaviour.

3.3 Support

- Appropriate response to the individual support needs of students.
- Access to affordable and good quality childcare to enable participation by people with childcare responsibilities.
- Concessionary fees policy for eligible students.

3.4 Use of Feedback

- Clear and effective procedures for seeking and responding to feedback from students and clients.
- Surveys of staff which identify the extent to which equal opportunities is part of the culture of the organisation.

3.5 Complaints and Concerns

- Clear and well-understood procedures for making and dealing with complaints.
- Complaints and other concerns are dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Monitoring and analysis of complaints and effective action taken to address common issues.

3.6 Staff Recruitment, Selection, Induction and Professional Development & Training

Swarthmore will ensure that:

- Employment, promotion and development opportunities are advertised locally or nationally, as appropriate, and all job opportunities will be outlined through clear and transparent job descriptions and person specifications.
- All recruitment and selection processes are free from bias and discriminatory practice.
- All staff employed by Swarthmore will receive an induction programme which enhances their potential for success within the job in question.
- All staff are aware of their entitlement to Continuous Professional Development to support them with their current job and to enable them to progress both within and outside the organisation. Where training is deemed essential, staff will either be released from duties or if attending in their own time, provided with an attendance allowance.
- Effective equal opportunities training will be provided for staff and periodic updating in response to changes in legislation, government initiatives and changes in the student population or other reasons.

All staff will be made aware of their responsibility for implementing the Centre's Equality and Diversity Policy and that they have a legal and moral obligation not to discriminate and to report incidents of discrimination against any individual or group of individuals. Following investigation, any member of staff found to be discriminating will face disciplinary proceedings.

- Making reasonable adjustments to our working practices, our buildings, our services and our publicly available information so that Swarthmore and its services are inclusive and accessible to all.
- Communicating this policy to relevant suppliers and contractors with a view to ensuring they act in accordance with it in their work for and on behalf of Swarthmore.

3.7 Information and Advice

- All users can expect a friendly, professional and confidential service provided by trained staff.
- Information and advice services available to all.
- Appropriate information and advice throughout the course and at exit.
- Information and general publicity materials which contain inclusive imagery in relation to diversity.
- Information and relevant documents (e.g. enrolment form) which can be available in alternative formats on request.
- Access to equipment or signing support to assist people with hearing difficulties.

3.8 Accommodation and Equipment

- Access for people with mobility difficulties within the physical limitations of the grade 2 listed building.
- Access to equipment to facilitate participation and learning for people with learning difficulties or with disabilities.
- Routine consideration of equal opportunities aspects including access when negotiating community learning venues.
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) will be in place prior to course start for students who need them; PEEPs will also be in place for staff with disabilities.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The following data is collected in relation to equal opportunities:

- students' age
- gender
- ethnicity
- disability & health
- Learning difficulty and analysed to inform planning in relation to the curriculum, support services, resources, access to accommodation and development of facilities. Data is used to inform self-assessment in relation to effectiveness of strategy to promote equal opportunities.
- Take-up of new courses and subsequent retention and successful completion is monitored and the data analysed and acted upon.
- Equality Impact Assessments of our policies and practices will be undertaken and action plans will be put in place against which performance will be monitored.
- Targets relevant to equal opportunities will be set and monitored

- Improvements to the diversity of staff through changes in the recruitment and selection procedures.
- Equal Opportunities will be a regular agenda item on Curriculum Team meetings, Management and Council meetings.
- Monitoring will be the responsibility of the Director who will report annually to the Trustee Council.
- The policy will be reviewed annually by the Management Team. As part of the review we will seek the views of stakeholders including students, staff, and external partners. Any recommendations for change will be passed to the Management Team and from them to the Trustee Council for approval.

5. Responsibilities

The Swarthmore Council has overall strategic responsibility for ensuring the organisation fulfils its commitments within this policy. To this end, the Council will:

- Set the tone, standards and expectations of leaders, managers and staff across Swarthmore by leading by example to influence the culture of the organisation, modelling the commitments and behaviour required to bring this policy to life.
- Ensure that the organisation is meeting its legal duties with regard to relevant legislation.
- Ensure that the commitments within this policy are being actively pursued with appropriate monitoring to review whether this policy is working effectively.
- Annually review the organisation's approach to providing equal opportunities and embracing diversity and provide strategic direction in the consideration of changes or improvements to relevant policies and procedures.

The Director and managers with overall accountability for departmental functions and activities within the organisation have management responsibility for the practical application of this policy. To this end, leaders and managers are expected to:

- Role model behaviour that contributes to creating a positive, inclusive working environment that embraces diversity and challenges discrimination;
- Incorporate the principles of this policy in the day-to-day management of people and operations;
- Monitor and review all relevant departmental functions to ensure this policy is being implemented; and
- Ensure Swarthmore publicity materials present appropriate, positive and non-stereotypical messages about people with a protected characteristic.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- they are aware of this policy and participate in related training activities and updates;
- they challenge (or report) discriminatory behaviour, whether intentional or unintentional; and they respond positively to the particular needs of people with a protected characteristic who they come into contact with during the course of their work.

All teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- they promote equality and diversity in the classroom with and between students;
- they “Value and promote social and cultural diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusion.” (ETF standard 5);
- they “Plan and deliver effective learning programmes for diverse groups or individuals in a safe and inclusive environment.” (ETF standard 14)

6. Dissemination

An electronic version of this Policy is available on a read only basis on the HR Online system. A hard copy can be found in the Policies & Procedures file in General Office. Brief equal opportunities statements will be included in the course brochures, the Student Handbook and on the website.