

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

SUMMARY

The policy promotes a welcoming and inclusive environment by ensuring equal opportunities and respect for all, regardless of background or identity.

PART ONE: Preliminary Information

1. INTRODUCTION:

At OMNES Education London School (OELS), we are committed to fostering a positive and inclusive culture where all staff, students, and visitors can thrive. We believe no one should feel the need to hide or minimise aspects of their identity for fear of stigma or discrimination.

As part of the wider OMNES Education group, we support and align with the efforts led by the CSR Team on the project Time to Act, which drives equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives across the group. You can learn more about their work here: [Time to Take Care – Societal](#).

2. SCOPE

We aim to be a school where people are encouraged to be authentic, and their unique perspectives, experiences, and skills are seen as valuable assets in and around the campus.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following OELS Policies:

- Appeal and Complaint Policy
- Student Behaviour Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Student Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Student Protection Plan
- Student Welfare and Wellbeing Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy

3. DEFINITIONS

Diversity in the context of EDI Policy refers to the presence and respectful acknowledgement of a wide range of human differences within the higher education community. These differences include, but are not limited to:

- **Race and Ethnicity:** Varied racial and ethnic backgrounds, ensuring representation and inclusivity of all racial and ethnic groups.
- **Gender:** Inclusion of all gender identities and expressions, promoting equity and respect for everyone regardless of their gender.

- **Sexual Orientation:** Acceptance and support of all sexual orientations, creating a safe environment for LGBTQ+ individuals.
- **Age:** Respect and integration of individuals from all age groups, from young students to mature learners and senior staff.
- **Disability:** Ensuring accessibility and support for individuals with physical, mental, or sensory disabilities, promoting their full participation in academic and campus life.
- **Socioeconomic Status:** Recognizing and addressing the varied socioeconomic backgrounds of students and staff, providing equal opportunities for all.
- **Religion and Belief:** Respecting and accommodating diverse religious beliefs and practices, fostering a culture of mutual respect and understanding.
- **Cultural Background:** Appreciating and integrating diverse cultural perspectives and experiences, enriching the educational environment.
- **Educational Background:** Valuing different educational experiences and pathways, promoting inclusivity in learning and teaching approaches.
- **National Origin:** Encouraging a global perspective by including individuals from different countries and nationalities.
- **Language:** Supporting linguistic diversity and promoting multilingualism within the institution.

The commitment to diversity in higher education involves proactive efforts to create an inclusive and welcoming environment where all individuals feel valued, respected, and able to contribute to and benefit from the educational experience. This includes implementing policies and practices that eliminate discrimination, enhance representation, and foster a sense of belonging for all members of the campus community.

Inclusion in the context of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy refers to the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity to ensure that all members of the higher education community feel welcomed, valued, respected, and supported. Inclusion involves creating an environment where differences are embraced and individuals from all backgrounds can thrive and fully participate in academic and campus life. Key aspects of inclusion include:

- **Equitable Access:** Ensuring that all individuals have equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from educational and extracurricular activities, resources, and support services.
- **Respect and Dignity:** Fostering a culture where every member of the community is treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their background or identity.
- **Participation and Engagement:** Encouraging and facilitating the active participation of all students and staff in academic discussions, decision-making processes, and campus activities.
- **Supportive Environment:** Providing resources, support systems, and accommodations that enable individuals from diverse backgrounds to succeed and feel a sense of belonging.
- **Representation:** Promoting diverse representation in leadership positions, faculty, staff, and student bodies to reflect the diversity of the broader community.

- **Cultural Competence:** Encouraging ongoing education and awareness to understand and appreciate diverse perspectives and experiences, and to address biases and stereotypes.
- **Collaboration and Community Building:** Creating opportunities for collaboration and interaction among individuals from different backgrounds to build a cohesive and supportive community.
- **Feedback and Improvement:** Establishing mechanisms for feedback from all community members to continually assess and improve inclusivity practices and policies.

Inclusion in higher education means not only recognising and valuing diversity but also taking deliberate steps to ensure that everyone has a voice and can contribute meaningfully to the campus community. It is about creating an environment where differences are not just tolerated but celebrated, and where every individual feels empowered to achieve their full potential.

Equality

Equality in the context of EDI Policy refers to ensuring that every individual within the higher education community has the same opportunities, rights, and access to resources and support. It involves treating everyone the same and providing uniform access to educational and extracurricular activities. Key aspects of equality include:

- **Equal Treatment:** Ensuring that all policies, procedures, and practices are applied uniformly to all individuals, without discrimination.
- **Non-Discrimination:** Creating an environment where all individuals are protected from bias, prejudice, and unequal treatment based on their identity or background.
- **Uniform Access:** Providing the same access to resources, opportunities, and support services for all students and staff.
- **Standardised Opportunities:** Offering the same opportunities for academic advancement, career development, and participation in campus life.

Equity

Equity, on the other hand, recognises that individuals have different needs, backgrounds, and circumstances, and aims to provide the necessary resources and support to achieve fair outcomes for everyone. Equity involves creating tailored approaches to ensure that all individuals can succeed and participate fully. Key aspects of equity include:

- **Fairness and Justice:** Implementing policies and practices that acknowledge and address systemic inequalities and barriers faced by marginalised groups.
- **Differentiated Support:** Providing resources and support tailored to the unique needs of individuals, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential.
- **Accessibility:** Ensuring that all facilities, resources, and services are accessible to individuals with diverse abilities and needs.
- **Outcome-Focused:** Striving for equitable outcomes by recognising and addressing the different starting points and challenges faced by various groups.
- **Inclusive Policies:** Developing and implementing policies that consider and address the diverse needs and circumstances of the entire community.

Implementation in Higher Education

In higher education, both equality and equity are essential for creating an inclusive and supportive environment. Institutions aim to:

- **Promote Equality:** By ensuring equal access to admissions, scholarships, and academic programmes, and by enforcing non-discrimination policies.
- **Foster Equity:** By offering targeted support programmes, and resources for underrepresented and disadvantaged groups to ensure they can thrive.

The ultimate goal is to create a learning and working environment where all individuals feel valued, supported, and empowered to succeed, regardless of their background or identity.

PART TWO: Policy

1. OUR COMMITMENT

We commit to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion:

- in the enrolment, selection, education, and assessment of **students**
- in the recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, development, and promotion of **staff, and lecturers** and in the way in which it welcomes and treats all visitors at OMNES Education London School and external organisations with which it works
- in fostering an inclusive environment
- in preventing discrimination, harassment and victimisation and respond effectively to incidents
- in removing barriers to the success of underrepresented and disadvantaged groups

To do this, we commit

- To provide a learning, working, and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all are respected, and which is free from unlawful discrimination, prejudice, intimidation, and all forms of harassment – including bullying.
- To offer staff and lecturers appropriate training on EDI to support our institutional goals and policies.
- To ensure that EDI initiatives are implemented and monitored at organisational, faculty, and operational levels.
- To involve all stakeholders in the development and implementation of the EDI policy and practices.
- To clear and transparent communication to all stakeholders ensuring accessibility of information related to the policies and the support services.

As per the **Equality Act 2010**, no student, employee, lecturer, worker, or visitor will be discriminated against on the basis of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender identity
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

All staff, students, and visitors to OMNES Education London School are expected to abide by the principles set out in this policy and to support OMNES Education London School in its delivery. Additional expectations of student conduct are detailed in the Student Behaviour Policy and the Student Handbook.

Practising equality of opportunity can sometimes mean treating people differently in order to treat them fairly, e.g. being flexible to meet the needs of working/studying parents.

2. AGREEMENT TO FOLLOW THIS POLICY

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy is integral to our institution's mission, values, and vision. This policy is not just a document but a fundamental part of our daily operations and strategic goals. One of our core values is "Global Citizenship," which underpins and reinforces the principles set out in this policy. By embracing global citizenship, we acknowledge the importance of understanding, respecting, and valuing the diverse cultures and perspectives that enrich our community.

This EDI policy is fully endorsed by senior management and has been rigorously reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors. It reflects our unwavering commitment to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive environment for all members of our community. This commitment is not only about compliance but about actively creating a space where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute to their fullest potential.

In alignment with our policy, the OMNES Education Group actively participates in the "Time to Act" initiative. This initiative is a comprehensive programme that focuses on enhancing our efforts in EDI, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and related subjects. Through "Time to Act," we engage in continuous learning, development, and implementation of best practices in these areas, ensuring that our policies and actions are effective and meaningful.

We hold all members of our community to high standards regarding EDI. We expect all staff, lecturers, students, and visitors to rigorously adhere to the guidelines and practices outlined

in this policy. This means not only following the rules but also embodying the spirit of the policy in everyday interactions and decisions. By doing so, we ensure that our community remains a place where diversity is celebrated, inclusion is a given, and everyone is treated with the utmost respect and dignity.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy is integral to our institution's mission, values and vision. One of our values is "Global Citizenship" which underpins this policy. Fully endorsed by senior management and approved by the Board of Directors, this policy reflects our unwavering commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment. Additionally, OMNES Education Group actively participates in the "Time to Act" initiative, which focuses on EDI, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and related subjects. We expect all staff, lecturers, students, and visitors to rigorously adhere to the guidelines and practices outlined in this policy, ensuring that our community remains a place where diversity is celebrated, and everyone is treated with respect and dignity.

3. OUR GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES:

Students are encouraged to raise any complaints by referring to the Appeals and Complaints Policy available on Boostcamp. This policy outlines the steps to file a complaint, ensuring that all concerns are addressed promptly and equitably. For detailed information, please access the Appeals and Complaints Policy on the OELS website: <https://www.omneseducation.com/en/our-facilities/the-campus/london-school/>

Staff will find detailed information on the grievance process in the Staff Handbook (available on internal server), specifically in section VII.7, titled "Grievance Procedure." This section provides comprehensive guidance on how to file a grievance, ensuring that all concerns are addressed promptly and fairly.

All grievances and complaints will be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors.

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