

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Key Information

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff, volunteers, and Trustees. It is a requirement that all members have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents.

Owner:	Circomedia
Author:	Academic Team
Date agreed by SMT/Board:	2 nd January 2024
Version:	1.0
Date of last review:	11 th December 2023
Date of next review:	11 th December 2025

This policy will be reviewed and ratified at least bi-annually and/or following any updates to national and local legislation and/or guidance.

Key Information	1
Introduction	1
Main Principles	2
Actions	2
Curriculum and Quality	3
Conclusion	3

Introduction

Circomedia is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion among our students, staff, and the wider community. We believe that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their background, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that may define them. In addition, we have a legal duty to promote equality in our daily work as educators and community leaders.

Meeting Legal Duties

Protected Characteristics and Changes in Law

Under the Equality Act 2010 the headings of age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity are known as 'protected characteristics'. Some new definitions of unlawful treatment were introduced by the Equality Act 2010, especially in relation to associative discrimination, perceptive discrimination, third party harassment and victimisation.

Main Principles

Our policy is based on the following principles:

Equality: We recognize that everyone has the right to equal treatment and opportunities, regardless of their differences. We strive to create an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, and victimization. It is important to note that equality may not mean treating everyone in the same way, it means we ensure that everyone gets equal opportunities to engage with our services and this may mean adjusting ensure this equality of opportunity.

Diversity: We celebrate the diversity of our student body and acknowledge the unique contributions that everyone brings. We believe that our differences make us stronger and enrich our learning experiences.

Inclusion: We aim to create an inclusive environment that welcomes everyone, with of their differences. We encourage open communication, mutual respect, and understanding among our students and staff.

Actions

Our commitment to equality and diversity includes the following actions:

Admission: We ensure that our admission process is fair and transparent, and that all applicants are treated fairly, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Curriculum: We design our curriculum to be inclusive and diverse, reflecting the wide range of skills and abilities that our students bring. We encourage our students to explore and celebrate their own cultural and artistic traditions, as well as those of others.

Support: We provide support and guidance to all our students, regardless of their background or circumstances. We aim to create a supportive and welcoming environment that encourages all students to thrive.

Events and activities: We organize events and activities that celebrate diversity and promote inclusivity. We encourage our students to participate in these events and activities, and to share their own experiences and perspectives.

Feedback: We welcome feedback from our students, staff, and the wider community on our policies and practices. We use this feedback to continuously improve and enhance our commitment to equality and diversity.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for staff to discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass students because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, marriage and civil

partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation in the provision of goods and services.

Reasonable adjustments will be provided for staff, students and customers who may be experiencing barriers due to disability, including alternative formats for other relevant 'protected characteristics'.

The recruitment, retention and achievement of students will be monitored by 'protected characteristics' where possible to determine trends and enable Circomedia to provide focused support where it may be needed to ensure success.

Decisions on which protected characteristics will be monitored by the Circomedia will be determined by consultation, reasonableness, meaningfulness, and resources available. By these means patterns of inequality will be challenged.

The Admissions Policy supports non-discriminatory access. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure equality of opportunity for all students providing suitable support for all students to access all services and facilities.

Curriculum and Quality

All activity will consider Equality and Diversity issues and will be reflected in quality processes.

- All forms of oppressive behaviour/bullying/harassment will be directly and appropriately challenged by staff and students adhering to the Anti-bullying Policy and the Complaints Policy enabling those who believe they have been victims of discrimination and harassment to raise concerns.
- Student experience through the induction and tutorial programmes will continue to use all opportunities to include delivery of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Teaching and Learning.

- All teaching and training resources and curriculum will ensure that they reflect and promote Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, where appropriate and will take steps to ensure that students have access to all opportunities irrespective of protected characteristic.
- Admissions processes prior to courses beginning will be used to personalise support for students, including those with additional support needs, this will continue throughout the academic year allowing for further disclosure of any disabilities or learning difficulties or other needs relating to 'protected characteristics'.
- Circomedia will, through a culture of inclusivity, ensure an environment in which people feel able and confident to disclose and to see disclosure as the right course of action. Circomedia will seek to provide reasonable adjustments in response to disclosure.

Conclusion

We expect all our students to uphold our values of equality and diversity, and to treat each other with respect and dignity. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimization within our community.

If any student feels that they have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or victimization, they are encouraged to report it to a member of staff or the relevant authority. We will take all complaints seriously and investigate them thoroughly.

We believe that by working together, we can create a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all our students.