

SUMS Group Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives

We believe that our people should be representative of all sections of society.

Equality

To provide equality and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time, or permanent, and all those with whom we engage, to oppose direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, or on other grounds (e.g. including but not restricted to: neurodiversity, socio-economic background, gender identity)

Inclusivity

A workplace that is inclusive and flexible, such that everyone can bring their whole selves to work. Where everyone is treated equitably: ensuring fair access to opportunities, fair treatment, fair outcomes, and fair access for all employees and service users.

Diversity

Building a workforce, member forums and Board that is reflective of and understanding of our diverse society.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commitments

We will encourage equality, diversity, and inclusivity in our organisation, as they are good business practice and support creativity and resilience. We will create a workplace free from bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination including but not restricted to the Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We will go further to promote dignity and respect for all, where individual differences and contributions are recognised and valued. We will provide training for all employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, including:

- Ensuring all employees understand that they, as well as their employer can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, client personnel, suppliers, and the public.
- Ensuring all employees are held accountable for conducting themselves in such ways as to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, to prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination.

We will take seriously any complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, clients, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

We will review employment practices and procedures (including pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, parental and caring leave, flexible working requests, selection for assignments and projects and other developmental opportunities) regularly to ensure fairness and to ensure alignment with the law.

We will ensure that we have means in place to allow to people to be heard, in safe, respectful and where required, confidential manner.

Our priorities for this academic year

We accept that change does not happen overnight. By making a commitment and setting targets, we aim to improve our overall approach to equality, diversity, and inclusivity. In the this academic year, we have set ourselves targets to:

- Understand and educate others in the difference between equality and equity, diversity and inclusion, and what this means to the people and communities in which we operate
- Deliver training to understand our own unconscious biases and how we can be aware of them in our everyday lives so we are able to remove their impact on our decisions and behaviours
- Understand how our current behaviours impact on the professional decisions we make and the way we select our suppliers to ensure we remove any barriers that might exist in selection
- Build strong networks and communities of support and advocacy, through external agencies such as [Stonewall.org.uk](https://www.stonewall.org.uk)
- Encourage flexible working, offering smarter working practices that help us become a more open, dynamic, and modern organisation that fosters greater creativity, efficiency and collaboration.

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by senior management and the Management Committee and will be reviewed annually to ensure the targets are met and are contribute to positive onward change.

Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

This document will be reviewed and updated at least annually.



This policy is supported by the CEO of SUMS Group Bernarde Hyde.

Signed:  Date: 7 December 2020

SUMS adopts the University of Reading's policies unless they are silent or there is a sound reason to deviate. These include all HR policies that have EDI embedded within.