

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

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Monitoring, evaluation and review: The Principal and Board of Governors will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout by UTC Leeds.	

1. Guiding principles

UTC Leeds is committed to equal opportunities and aims to be an UTC where everyone:

- Is respected and respects others
- Takes part in the life of UTC Leeds
- Achieves to their potential
- Develops skills essential to life and employment
- Exercises choice

We share the belief that no-one should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of: race, disability, physical ability, age, religion/belief, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, gender, gender reassignment, sexuality, nationality or trade union membership.

Our equality policy is inclusive of our whole UTC Leeds community – students, staff, parents/carers, contractors/externally employed staff working on UTC Leeds site and visitors.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies can address discrimination, promote inclusive practice and ensure that those in our community requiring extra support receive it. This will ensure that unlawful discrimination (either direct or indirect) and other undesirable behaviour including harassment does not occur.

In terms of staff equality at UTC Leeds we recognise that this includes all prospective and existing employees:

- Women and men
- People from minority ethnic backgrounds,
- People of different religions and from different faith backgrounds
- People of all sexual orientations and transgendered people

- People with any disability
- All ages of staff

Policy Statement

UTC Leeds is committed to supporting, developing and promoting equality and diversity in all of its practices; it aims to establish an inclusive culture, free from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

UTC Leeds will, in carrying out its activities, have due regard to:

- a) the promotion of equality of opportunity
- b) the promotion of good relations between different groups
- c) the elimination of unlawful indirect and direct discrimination

In publishing this policy statement, UTC Leeds is committing to the following principles:

- a) To use equality information to inform UTC Leeds's strategic planning.
- b) To be active in meeting the public sector general and specific equality duties will be informed by data and considered analysis.
- c) To deliver and monitor the equality and diversity policy using evidence based data.
- d) To support staff to meet their equality and diversity responsibilities through learning and development programmes.
- e) To ensure that equalities information is accessible, current, and shared openly whilst observing data protection.
- f) To monitor all stages of the employment process, with a view to taking action where appropriate.
- g) To monitor all stages of the student cycle with a view to taking action where appropriate.
- h) To work towards establishing a workforce that reflects the student body and the diversity of local and regional communities.

2. The legal framework and other supporting policies

The following legislation informs UTC Leeds Staff Equal Opportunities Policy:

The Equality Act 2010 Which consolidated previously existing discrimination law into a single Act, harmonising definitions where appropriate and strengthening the law to support progress on equality by extending protection from discrimination to new areas and introducing new measures.

The Act covers discrimination in employment and vocational training, the provision of goods and services, public functions, education, premises and associations. The Act replaces the following legislation:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Part 2, Equality Act 2006

- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007.

Of the previous discrimination laws, only the Equality Act 2006, insofar as it relates to the constitution and operation of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) remain in force.

- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Human Rights Act 1998 and 2000
- The Part-time employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000

3. Definitions

Direct discrimination: where an individual or group receives less favourable treatment with some unjustifiable reason because of their sex, race or disability

Indirect discrimination: applying unjustifiable requirements and conditions which have a disproportionate impact on an individual of a particular group.

Addressing Prejudice Related Incidents

UTC Leeds is opposed to all forms of prejudice, and we recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fair less well in the education system. We provide both our pupils and staff with an awareness of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents. If incidents still occur we will address them immediately.

The roles and responsibilities within our UTC Leeds community

Our Principal will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, students and visitors are informed about the Equality policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that UTC Leeds's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the policy and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy
- ensure that the Leadership Team (LT) is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our Governing Body will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality policy
- ensure that the action and staff development plans arising from the policy are part of the UTC Leeds development plan
- support the Principal in implementing any actions necessary
- inform and consult with parents/carers about the policy
- evaluate and review this policy every year

Our Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy
- with the Principal, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy

Our Students will:

- be involved in the on-going development of the policy through the Student Forum, and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the policy

Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the on going development of the policy
- have access to the policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy
- be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child

Our UTC Leeds staff will:

- be involved in the on-going development of the policy
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole UTC Leeds issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements

We will ensure that the whole UTC Leeds community is aware of the Single Equality Policy and our published equality information and equality objectives by publishing them on UTC Leeds's intranet and external website.

Breaches

Breaches to this statement will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other UTC Leeds policies are dealt with and in accordance with our behaviour management and disciplinary policy.

Employees who believe there has been a breach of this policy may raise this with line manager / principal.

Students and Parents/Carers who believe there has been a breach of this policy may complain through UTC Leeds Complaints Procedure.

Any visitor who believes there has been a breach of this policy may complain in writing to the Principal.

4. Employment

UTC Leeds as an Employer

As an employer, UTC Leeds is committed to its employment policies and practices for every member of staff, including part-time, agency and supply. This also includes opportunities for professional development.

The aim is to create an environment where all Staff and Board members:

- Apply equality and fairness in employment practices. All decisions including advertising of vacancies, short listing, selection, induction, appraisal, training, development, promotion and pay will be based on an objective and fair assessment of need.
- Draw the attention of management or the appropriate trade union to suspected acts or practices which affect equal opportunities
- UTC Leeds will ensure that all staff (including board members) involved in recruitment are trained in equal opportunities practices and that procedures are fair, honest and open. UTC Leeds will monitor staff recruitment, retention and career by ethnicity, gender, disability and age.
- All staff have a right to challenge any decision or action which they believe to be in breach of these principles. All complaints relating to employment must be made at first informally and if necessary the next step should be through the formal Grievance procedure.
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- Any member of staff who deliberately or knowingly contravenes the policy will be liable to formal disciplinary action.
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- All complaints are assumed to be made in good faith unless there is evidence to the contrary. If, however, an accusation is found to have been made maliciously, disciplinary action may be taken against the person making the false complaint.

5. Gender

UTC Leeds is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on gender, including gender change, sexual orientation or marital status. This will include any unequal treatment based on pregnancy.

6. Race/Religion

UTC Leeds is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin.

There may be situations in UTC Leeds which require special consideration and where a genuine occupational qualification may apply, for example to justify the employment of a particular sex or someone of one particular race or ethnic origin.

However, these situations will be unusual and exceptional and will be discussed with the staff in advance.

7. Disability

UTC Leeds is opposed to any discrimination against people with disabilities based on assumptions of their ability or otherwise to carry out the duties of a post in UTC Leeds. All candidates with

disabilities who meet the basic essential criteria for a post will be interviewed. Provision will be made for adjustments to the working conditions or environment where this is practicable.

The definition of disability is “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an individual’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

The impairment must have lasted or will last at least 12 months or last the rest of an individual’s life. This does not mean that people with “disabilities” do not have “abilities” that are valuable within a working environment.

8. Age

UTC Leeds is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination, based on age towards any employee before, during or after employment.

All employees have the right to be treated fairly whatever age, and not be subjected to any practice, which may disadvantage because of being a particular age, unless objectively justified. UTC Leeds must not subject any employee to harassment that violates an employee’s dignity, nor victimisation because they have made or intend to make a complaint of discrimination on the grounds of age. This right continues after the working relationship ends.

9. Other

UTC Leeds also recognises its statutory obligation not to discriminate on the grounds Of Trade Union and Political Affiliation

10. Harassment

UTC Leeds is opposed to any act of victimisation or harassment against any member of staff on the grounds of their gender or change of gender, colour, ethnic or national origins or religion, disability or age. Such action will be investigated in accordance with UTC Leeds procedure and may lead to formal disciplinary action

11. Positive action

UTC Leeds recognises that the avoidance of discrimination is not sufficient to ensure that equality of opportunity exists in UTC Leeds. It will therefore give full consideration to measures of positive action which may assist in achieving the aims of this policy. These measures may include:

- Encouraging applications from specific groups which are underrepresented in UTC Leeds
- Supporting training measures for under-represented groups
- The use of job-sharing arrangements wherever practicable
- Exploring the availability of childcare facilities in the area which can be made available to employees in UTC Leeds
- Exploring the possibility of career breaks to assist with family commitments

12. Dignity at work

UTC Leeds is committed to the principles of dignity at work for all staff. This includes the right to be treated with respect by all managers and colleagues. Any person who fails to act in accordance with this principle may be the subject of formal disciplinary action.

13. Training and development

The principle outlined in relation to fair and equal treatment will also apply to selection for training. Details of training opportunities will be made available to all staff, who will be given the opportunity to request training on courses which they believe to be relevant to their role and personal development. There can, of course, be no guarantee that all such requests will be met. Priorities for training allocation will be based on UTC Leeds's overall development plan and budget allocations.

14. Race equality

UTC Leeds fully understands the need to promote racial harmony and to plan opportunities for combating racism in our policies, procedures and curriculum. We believe that our UTC Leeds must be a safe place for everyone and we are committed to the principles outlined in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report and to the recommendations it makes. We are committed to:

- Tackling racial discrimination
- Promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations.

15. Tackling racial discrimination

We will tackle racial discrimination by monitoring the outcomes of opportunities at our UTC Leeds and by dealing with and reporting racist incidents.

We accept the definition of a racist incident adopted by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report: **A racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.**

Allegations of harassment and discrimination based on ethnicity will be investigated as far as possible, using UTC Leeds's usual disciplinary procedures, and racism will be directly challenged.

Action will be taken to prevent the likelihood of recurrence.

Our procedure for dealing with racist incidents will be made known to everyone at or connected with our UTC Leeds.

In the event of a member of staff being implicated, the usual disciplinary procedures will apply.

16. UTC Leeds objectives

The aims of this policy will be met by:

Promoting the principles and practices of equality and justice throughout UTC Leeds.

- Establish an Action Plan to guide the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy

- Comply with Equal Opportunities legislation

Identifying and removing practices that may result in direct or indirect discrimination

- Develop the support and training available for all staff, including board members, to develop their practice in Equal Opportunities work.
- Monitor and evaluate staff activity by all protected characteristics including:
 - Membership of the Board of Governors
 - Staff recruitment
 - Staff retention
 - Training and development
 - Formal Action including investigation under any staff policy
 - Staff leavers

17. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

A range of information, including quantitative and qualitative data, will be used. Annual reports will indicate progress on equalities issues outlined in the annual Action Plan.

It will include:

- Data by all protected characteristics
- Membership of the Board of Governors
- Staff recruitment
- Staff retention
- Training and development
- Formal Action including investigation under any staff policy
- Staff leavers
- Staff in post

Applicants for employment, training and promotion