

# SEEM

Equal Opportunities, Equality and Diversity Policy

Effective September 201J  
Next Review Date August 20G€

SEEM

## **Purpose/Scope**

SEM is working proactively to maximise equality of opportunity across the organisation, in access to its courses and in the provision of resources and services.

SEM is committed to the opposition of discrimination in any form. SEM is also committed to the ideal of social justice and equality of opportunity. SEM acknowledges the presence of and expresses its opposition to all forms of discrimination, harassment and inequality of treatment. SEM aims to provide an environment where all are free from any form of discrimination and prejudice.

SEM believes in equality of opportunity for all students and staff. We are opposed to any form of action, words or institutional practice which discriminates against people on the basis of race, colour, culture, religion, language, ability, disability, sex, age, marital status, sexuality or political affiliation. We are committed to the elimination of discrimination in all forms. Furthermore we recognise the effect of past discrimination and will seek through programmes of legally acceptable positive action to increase the level of participation of students and staff of those groups that are currently under-represented.

We aim to celebrate the diversity of backgrounds of all of our students and staff and we will challenge discriminatory language or behaviour whenever necessary.

This Code, in its entirety, applies to all members of SEM, Community or potential members of that community.

**In the event of any uncertainty about the scope of this procedure or who to contact in the first instance, the Head of Administration will be happy to help with any advice or support needed:**

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## **Definitions**

### **THE EQUALITY ACT 2010**

Within the United Kingdom there has been a significant body of legislation relating to discrimination. Also a number of Commissions in support of the legislation have issued codes on various aspects of discrimination from time to time. This policy reflects the consolidation of previous individual rights equality legislation into the Equality Act 2010 (The Act).

SEM will implement its general equality duty set out in the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

SEM will also meet its specific duties as defined by the law. It will continue to implement and assess the impact of its policies, procedures and practices on present and potential students, staff and visitors,

SEM believes that high quality education is a right for all, and encourages all students and staff to reach their potential.

The new act streamlines the protection of individuals and will extend the coverage for what has been referred to as “protected characteristics”, these are:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex and gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or civil partnership

Through this Single Equality Scheme, SEM will assert its commitment to equality and inclusion to broaden its policies to serve those identified by the legislation; in our procedures and practices we will look to this scheme to fulfil our obligations as a provider of higher education and services.

### **Responsibilities**

The Principal has overall responsibility for equality issues and the Scheme.

The Principal is responsible for the application of the scheme to all matters relating to Staff Recruitment and Induction.

The Head of Student Services and Resources Manager is responsible for the application of the scheme to all matters relating to students other than in a teaching situation.

All members of staff and students are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of SEM's statutory duties in relation to equal opportunities, that they uphold the principles underpinning this scheme in all actions and behaviour. They are expected to challenge any instances of discriminatory behaviour.

The Principal is responsible for monitoring and evaluating SEM's progress in achieving targets that it sets for itself with regard to creating equal opportunities for all those within its Community.

### **Policy**

SEM is committed to equality of opportunity for all actual or potential staff and students and users of SEM, and will take all reasonable steps to eliminate unfair and unjustified discrimination. Specifically it will:

- Bring this code to the attention of all members of SEM community
- Require that staff and students reflect their commitment to this policy through the promotion of equal opportunities in their everyday activities.
- Ensure that equal opportunity principles are applied in all appropriate policies and procedures, and other documentation.
- Establish procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of and compliance with this policy.
- Co-operate fully with committee and other educational bodies to ensure equal opportunities for all in the educational and training activities of SEM.
- Review procedures and practices as appropriate but at least annually.
- Take appropriate action against anyone who discriminates against any other person.

### **General**

1. Discrimination can be either direct or indirect. Direct discrimination occurs where people are treated less favourably than others on grounds, which have no bearing on their ability to achieve that, which is required.

2. Indirect discrimination occurs when unjustifiable conditions or requirements are applied which have a disproportionately adverse effect on a particular section of the community.
3. Favouritism is discrimination in that unjustifiably favouring one individual does by definition disadvantage others.
4. Equality of opportunity applies to all areas of School activity. In particular focus will be directed to the key areas of:
  - Marketing
  - Selection . Staff and Students
  - Enrolment
  - Learning opportunity
  - Teaching and Learning
  - Induction
  - Curriculum
  - Health and Safety
  - Advancement

## **Procedures**

### **Reporting of Incidences**

- The SEM Complaints procedure should be followed.

### **Principles**

- SEM will implement policies procedures and practices that will ensure the Equal Opportunities Policy for present and potential students, staff and visitors.
- SEM believes that education is a right for all.
- SEM will actively work towards offering equality of opportunity to all students, staff and visitors irrespective of ability, age, colour, educational needs, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, race, religion, sexual orientation, social background, political persuasion and trade union affiliation.
- All participants in the educational process will be aware that they have a legal and moral responsibility to support the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- SEM will take positive steps to eliminate all forms of discrimination, whether direct or indirect.
- Discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Wherever possible SEM publicity and literature will be made available in appropriate languages and formats.

### **Specific Principles and Procedures**

- SEM Equal Opportunities Policy statement will appear in all relevant School publications.
- There will be no discrimination in relation to the recruitment and admission of students. Positive action will be taken to increase participation in under-represented groups.
- Advice to students on financial support matters will be provided in appropriate circumstances.
- SEM shall work toward ensuring that all students have physical access to teaching, support and social areas.
- SEM shall take into account the needs of the local community and where appropriate involve representation.

### **Recruitment and Selection of Staff**

- Recruitment and selection of all staff will be carried out in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Policy practice
- The long-term aim is that the SEM establishment should broadly reflect the make-up of the available-for-work population of Greater Manchester

- The constitution of interview panels shall, wherever possible be representative of SEM population.
- The criteria for selection and also progression of existing employees will be determined solely on the basis of the requirements of the job.

### **Marketing Publicity and External Liaison**

- SEM will act to identify the needs of disadvantaged groups. This will include liaison with group representatives and market research.
- Publicity material will, where practical, reflect the diversity of, and be made available to, the community and will be free from bias.
- SEM's Equal Opportunities Policy will be made available publically and given out on request.
- SEM's publicity material will be made available in public places throughout the community.

### **Curriculum**

- It is the legal and ethical responsibility of all staff to conduct their teaching and learning activities in a non-discriminatory manner.
- All students will be provided with an effective Induction programme that familiarises them with SEM's Equal Opportunities Policy and helps them to recognise the rights and responsibilities of themselves and others in relation to equality of opportunity.
- SEM will seek to ensure that resource materials and learning activities are free from discriminatory assumptions, images and language, and will act upon any that are brought to SEM's attention. Exceptions may be made where such materials and activities are required for specific learning purposes.
- Curriculum design will be sufficiently flexible, and the curriculum offer sufficiently broad, to take account of the needs of all students, with the objective of providing easy access to the curriculum for non-traditional students.
- Inclusive learning and widening participation initiatives will be explored and supported to maximise learning opportunities for all.
- SEM will provide appropriate facilities to support students in becoming independent students.
- SEM will set targets for and monitor retention, achievement and progression rates for all students leading to positive action for under-represented groups.

### **Support Services**

- Student Support will provide personal support for any student who has been the recipient of harassment, bullying or any other form of discrimination.
- Student Welfare will provide appropriate impartial advice and guidance to all students
- Management will provide unbiased advice and guidance to employees on all issues connected with their employment and their personal and professional development.

### **SEM Environment**

- SEM seeks to create an environment in which all students, staff and visitors feel comfortable, irrespective of race, sex, class ability etc.
- SEM will respond positively and courteously to all its students, staff and visitors from the first point of contact.
- SEM facilities will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the needs of particular groups receive attention.
- Wheelchair access on the premises is not possible at present, however provision will be made wherever possible for tutors to site-visit those wishing to study on a one-to-one basis.

### **Staff Training and Development**

- SEM will make all employees aware of their responsibility for the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- SEM will provide training for School employees in respect of equality of opportunity and implementation of the SEM Policy.
- Staff training and development opportunities will be available for all staff, both teaching and support, full-time and part-time.
- SEM will take positive action to offer opportunities for training and promotion to groups of employees who are identified as disadvantaged.

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