

# Student Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 NMITE is committed in its pursuit of academic excellence to equality of opportunity and to a pro-active and inclusive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture, and values diversity. This commitment is underpinned by NMITE's Shared Principles, Values and Behaviours and additional information can be found in the 'about us' section of our website [www.nmite.ac.uk](http://www.nmite.ac.uk)
- 1.2 A Glossary of terms used can be found in [Appendix 1](#).
2. Our Commitment to you is to...
  - 2.1 Create, foster, and promote a positive inclusive culture that promotes a mutual respect for each other and the values, beliefs, and individual differences we all hold. They are what make us individual and collectively are what creates diversity and strength within NMITE.
  - 2.2 Ensure equal opportunities to students and employees of any age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

- 2.3 Actively encourage and will strive for equality and inclusion within NMITE and will not condone or tolerate discrimination or unacceptable behaviour. We have a tolerant and social culture that benefits everyone.
- 2.4 This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Strategic Advisory Group – Appendix 2](#); who ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is continually promoted throughout NMITE. NMITE will review student recruitment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and to update policies to reflect any changes in legislation.

### 3. The Equality Act 2010

- 3.1 Underpinning the policy is The Equality Act 2010 which came into force on 1 October 2010 and the Public-Sector Equality Duty from 5 April 2011. The Equality Act established 9 'protected characteristics, on the grounds of which it is unlawful to discriminate against a person:

**Age** - A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32 year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30 year olds).

**Disability** - A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Gender reassignment** - The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

**Marriage and civil partnership** - Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

**Pregnancy and maternity** - Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

**Race** - refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

**Religion and belief** - religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

**Sex** - A man or a woman.

**Sexual orientation** - Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.



## 4. Our Key Principles

- 4.1 All students, applicants and employees will be:
- i. Treated fairly, respectfully and with dignity
  - ii. Recognised for the contribution they make as individuals and valued for who they are and what they will become
  - iii. Will be supported within their study and/or workplace
  - iv. Provided with fair and equal access to programme delivery and student support services
  - v. Accountable for the impact of their own behaviour and actions and cognisant and aware of those around them to be good citizens of the NMITE culture
- 4.2 Leadership and commitment at all levels of the organisation are central to the success of the scheme to ensure we eliminate discrimination and seek to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion wherever we can. We look to everyone – staff and students – to act as a role model, to develop in themselves and in their work continued commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, and to challenge the inappropriate behaviour and attitudes of others.
- 4.3 All NMITE staff with leadership responsibilities have a responsibility to promote and implement the principles of this policy. They are also responsible for responding appropriately to any reports of harassment or discrimination and ensuring issues are dealt with in a timely fashion through appropriate channels and processes.

## 5. Compliance

- 5.1 As a Public body, NMITE has additional duties to promote equality – The Equality Duty. The Equality Duty requires NMITE to have 'due regard' to the need to:
- **Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination**, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of a protected characteristic
  - **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
  - **Foster Good relations** between people who have a protected characteristic and people who do not.
- 5.2 Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) have been completed to support our commitment to the Equality Act 2010, these can be provided upon request.

## 6. Monitoring and Reporting

- 6.1 Using an Equality & Diversity Monitoring Form NMITE will monitor the recruitment and progress of all students and staff, collecting and collating equalities information and data as required by law and for the furtherance of NMITE's equality aims and objectives.



- 6.2 Students will be asked to complete a form on registration and thereafter annually at the start of each academic year.
- 6.3 The data collected in a form and will only be used for the purpose of statistical monitoring. This information will only be retained for as long as is considered necessary for monitoring purposes and then it will be destroyed. At all times it will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Form available on request.

## **7. Accessibility**

- 7.1 NMITE will ensure that services and information are accessible to everyone; it has an agreed standard of accessible and inclusive facilities for all of its learning sites – [Appendix 3](#). Documents will be provided in other suitable alternative formats where possible.
- 7.2 NMITE will make reasonable adjustments to learning and assessment to ensure that students with a disability are not put at a disadvantage. Reasonable adjustments are also available for students who might not consider themselves to have a 'disability' but who nevertheless would benefit from additional support due to an ongoing medical or mental health condition. It is individual responsibility to notify NMITE if you believe you require reasonable adjustment, and you are encouraged to make a request as early as possible by contacting Student Services Team.

## **8. Discrimination, bullying and harassment**

- 8.1 NMITE emphasises that discrimination, bullying, and harassment is unacceptable conduct which may lead to disciplinary action under the Student Disciplinary Policy & Procedure. Please also refer to the Student Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy.
- 8.2 Any student who feels that they have not been treated fairly should discuss this with a member of the Student Services Team or their Personal Tutor.
- 8.3 If this approach does not solve the issue, the student may raise the issue through the Student Complaints Resolution Procedure. Investigations of a complaint will be handled sensitively with due respect for the rights of all parties involved. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedure.
- 8.4 NMITE will ensure that individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. If it is resolved that the allegations of unfair treatment under the policy are unfounded but have been raised in bad faith against an alleged person, the initial complainant may be subject to disciplinary action.

## 9. Complaints and Resolution.

- 9.1 Offer holders and students at NMITE are encouraged to disclose a disability and make an application for reasonable adjustment under NMITE's Disability Support and Reasonable Adjustments Policy.
- 9.2 Students who feel that they may have been discriminated against because of their disability or any other Protected Characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, can make a complaint through NMITE's Student Complaints Resolution Procedure.
- 9.3 In addition, they also have the right to pursue a complaint under the terms of the Equality Act 2010 via the courts. If a student feels they have a case, they may start proceedings against the governing body of NMITE. For further advice and guidance, a student can contact the [Equality Advisory and Support Service \(EASS\)](#). The EASS is an independent advice service, not operated by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
- 9.4 Students may, if they wish, pursue a case under the Equality Act 2010 at the same time as making a case through NMITE's procedures outlined within.
- 9.5 Further information can be obtained from the EHRC website:  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)



## Appendix 1 - Glossary

**Protected characteristics** – A characteristic or trait of a person which may not be used as a basis for decision making in the workplace and, if used might constitute unlawful discrimination. Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 defines the following groups as protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief (including lack of belief), Sex and Sexual Orientation.

**Direct Discrimination** – occurs if you treat someone less favourably than someone else has been treated (or would be treated) because the person belongs to one of the protected groups.

**Indirect Discrimination** – occurs when an organisation makes a decision, or puts in place a particular policy, practice or procedure, which appears to treat everyone equally, but which in practice leads to people from a particular protected group being treated less favourably than others.

**Harassment** – Harassment is unwanted behaviour by one or more people, whether intentional or not, which violates a person's dignity and created a feeling of anxiety, humiliation, distress, or discomfort. It has three common features:

- It is unwelcome
- It makes the environment intimidating, degrading or offensive
- It is unacceptable to the complainant.

**Bullying** – is a form of harassment and describes a threatening or intimidating environment in which one or more people may become fearful because of negative or hostile behaviour.

**Victimisation** – is where an employee is treated less favorably than others because they have asserted legal rights against NMITE or assisted a colleague in doing so. For example, victimization may occur where an employee has raised a genuine grievance against NMITE and is demoted as a result.

## Appendix 2 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategic Advisory Group

### Purpose

The purpose of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategic Advisory Group is to provide independent advice and guidance to NMITE in enhancing EDI within the organisation.

NMITE's core values are based on equality, diversity and inclusion, and aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Ensuring that all individuals who come into contact with NMITE, whether as a student, employee or in any other capacity are treated with dignity and respect.
- Ensuring that the opportunities NMITE provides for learning, development and employment are made available on a non-discriminatory basis.
- Provides a safe, supportive and welcoming environment for students, staff and visitors.
- To provide continuous learning and improvement to EDI initiatives within NMITE.

### Quorum

The quorum shall be 50% of the committee membership.

### Terms of Reference

The EDI Strategic Advisory Group will provide external oversight of NMITE's EDI workplan in the context of NMITE's business and delivery plan, including:

- Developing, overseeing and reviewing NMITE's EDI strategy, objectives, policies and initiatives, in order to advise and make recommendations to the Executive committee.
- Monitoring and reporting the performance of NMITE with regard to its equality, diversity and inclusion related strategic objectives and statutory obligations.
- Publishing on an annual basis a report highlighting key achievements and developments.
- Acting as a 'critical friend' in challenging NMITE's working practices.
- Advocate for NMITE's EDI approaches, and EDI concerns more generally, across the HE sector
- Identifying current and emerging strategic EDI issues, challenges and opportunities.
- Acting as a sounding board for policy and programme development, and helping determine development priorities.
- Promoting a working and learning environment that ensures equality, celebrates diversity and promotes inclusion for all.



- Sharing EDI best practice is identified and shared across the organisation., and where appropriate, externally

#### Meetings

The EDI Strategic Advisory group shall meet a minimum of 3 times a year.

Elected members and co-opted members of the Committee will serve for a 12 month term and can be re-elected for a maximum of 3 terms.



## Appendix 3 – Standard provision for accessible and inclusive facilities

To ensure equality across all sites, wherever feasible<sup>1</sup>, NMITE commit to the following model of accessible and inclusive facilities within all NMITE developments which are designed for either the sole or joint function of learning.

- i. Ease of movement - to provide step free/level access to all buildings with the provision of a lift to upper floors.
- ii. Toilet + shower facilities - to provide both gender neutral and discreet single sex toilet and shower facilities
- iii. Hearing Impairment - to install hearing loops or portable hearing devices in appropriate settings.
- iv. Faith and reflection room - to provide a multi-faith and reflection room to supplement local community provision.
- v. First Aid & Quiet Room - to provide a multi-purpose space which can be used as a first aid point and a private space for student, staff, or visitors to meet their personal needs, for example to self-administer medication or breastfeeding.
- vi. Baby changing facilities - to provide a minimum of one baby changing unit.
- vii. Accessible parking bays - to provide a minimum ratio of accessible parking bays.
- viii. Residential Accommodation
  - To provide a minimum ratio of 1:20 fully accessible student accommodation bedrooms in line with legislative specifications in terms of size and facilities
  - Communal areas will be designed to allow ease of movement with kitchens having adjustable height surfaces, storage, and cooking facilities

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<sup>1</sup> When considering feasibility NMITE will undertake an assessment of size of the premises, capacity (students/staff) and its proximity to other NMITE premises.



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