



## **Equality & Diversity Policy**

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## **Equality and Diversity Policy**

### **1. Policy Statement**

MHR is committed to diversity and equality of opportunity. The aim is to create an environment in which people treat each other with mutual respect, regardless of age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, gender, gender identity, transgender, political opinion or affiliation, sexual orientation, trade union activity, unrelated criminal convictions or any other type of discrimination.

### **2. Purpose of the Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear Institute guidance regarding equality and diversity and to establish key principles, structures and monitoring arrangements for the MHR Institute. The policy will be applicable to Governors, senior managers and all employees and students in the MHR Institute, contractors, volunteers and visitors.

The MHR Institute will regularly measure, review and reinforce the effectiveness of the policy through:

- The Single Equality Scheme action plan
- The cycle of Self-Assessment
- Staff and student surveys and data analysis
- Collecting and disseminating examples of good practice
- Monitoring activity

### **3 Key Principles**

MHR believes that all forms of prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable. In recognition of the fact that they can take a variety of forms, depending on the group against whom they are directed, the MHR's Equality and Diversity Policy will embody the issues specific to discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender, transgender, race, religion and other beliefs, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

### **4 Equality Principles within the Employment Code of Practice**

MHR embraces diversity in all of its aspects and aims to employ a workforce, which reflects, at every level, the community, which it serves.

In seeking to achieve a balanced workforce at all levels, the MHR will ensure that no employee, job applicant or candidate for promotion or training will be disadvantaged, or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the job. Reasonable adjustments will be made to arrangements and premises, to ensure equal access for employees or potential employees who have particular needs or who are disabled.

In order to ensure that all employees and potential employees are treated with equality and fairness at all stages of employment, and that their treatment is based solely on objective and job related criteria, the MHR will ensure that equality issues are embedded into all its policies, practices and procedures.

Support to employees will be available through the Personnel Team as well as via normal line management.

## **5 Equality Principles within the Teaching and Learning Code of Practice**

MHR will aim to make courses accessible to as wide a range of students as possible via increased flexibility, modularization of programmes, open/distance learning courses and outreach provision in accordance with the philosophy and practice of inclusive learning.

MHR will provide impartial educational careers guidance and counselling to all students and ensure that learners receive appropriate learning support to meet their individual needs.

Support to students will be available through their Learner Support Practitioners, Learning Support Key Workers or Student Services. Alternatively students may seek advice from the MHR Counselling Service. Specific support will be provided and/or barriers removed where reasonably practicable to enable a student with a difficulty/disability to use particular facilities or services.

## **6 Scope of the Policy**

The Equality Policy covers all members of the MHR community. In ensuring that this policy is fully effective and that all MHR employees and students are fully committed to it, the MHR undertakes to work locally in partnership with the recognised trade unions, with work based learning employers, with employees and students in general, in its development and implementation.

## **7 Monitoring**

The MHR undertakes to conduct comprehensive and effective monitoring of all aspects of staffing and the student body. Monitoring will be undertaken in accordance with best practice recommendations, particularly from bodies such as the Equality and Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) and with regard to data protection and the Right of the Person with Disabilities Law (2015).

## **8 Employment**

The MHR is committed to the collection of statistics, analysis of data and presentation of data, as well as monitoring on an ongoing basis, as employment policy and practices change.

MHR will use the two main forms of monitoring, i.e. of the composition of the existing workforce and the recruitment and selection process. In particular, reviewing the workforce with reference to sex, age, race, ethnicity, disability and gender.

After the employment relationship has ended, MHR may retain statistics; data about the composition of the workforce, including appraisal and promotion records for the purpose of carrying out equality and diversity monitoring, and may also look at reasons for resignation and resignation rates.

## **9 Students**

MHR will monitor all students and potential students in order to inform the setting of targets and the measurement of progress in achieving them. For example, in:

- Applications, success and failure rates for admission to programmes
- Retention rates
- Achievement rates
- Work placements including success rates, satisfaction levels and job offers
- Learning Support
- Progression
- Disciplinary action
- Complaints by students or their sponsors

## **10 Positive Action**

MHR undertakes to follow positive action measures allowed by law to rectify disadvantages in employment or education provision revealed by monitoring.

Positive action, allows the MHR to:

- Provide facilities or services (in the form of training, education, or welfare) to meet the particular needs of people from under-represented groups.
- Target job training at particular groups that are under-represented in a particular area of work.
- Encourage applications from groups that are under-represented in particular areas of education or work.

Positive action strategies must be kept under regular review, and they cannot be used once the particular needs have been met, or if under-representation no longer exists. The MHR will ensure that when using positive action as a strategy, it falls within the law.

## **11 Meeting Our Duties**

The MHR will seek to ensure through its core values that:

- Governors, staff, students and their sponsors (including work placement providers) are aware of our Equality Policy and the action needed for its implementation.
- Staff, students and their sponsors (including work placement providers) are aware of the value placed upon equality and that action will be taken in the event of any breach of the policy.
- Governors and staff have access to comprehensive information, which assists them to plan, implement and monitor actions to carry out their responsibilities under the policy.

The MHR will also ensure that publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about equality and diversity.

## **12 Complaints Procedure**

Any student, potential student, job applicant or member of staff may raise, either informally or formally, complaints of unfair and/or discriminatory treatment. MHR will deal with all complaints fully and sensitively. In some cases this may involve initiating disciplinary action.

Complaints from students can be raised through the Complaints Procedure. Details are available through Student Services.

### **Students**

Support to students is available through their Tutor, Learner Support Practitioners or Student Services. Alternatively students may seek advice from the Counselling Service. Specific support may be available to enable a student with a difficulty/disability to use particular services or facilities.

### **Employees**

Complaints from staff can be made via the Grievance Procedure. Details are available on the Sharepoint or from the Personnel Team.

Support to staff is available through the Personnel Team as well via normal line management.

## Glossary of terms

### **Disability**

A disabled person is described in the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 as one who has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### **Discrimination**

The term '*discrimination*' is used in this document to mean less favourable treatment of an individual on the grounds of age, disability, gender, transgender, race, religion and other beliefs, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

### **Diversity**

Diversity is about recognising, valuing and taking account of people's different backgrounds, knowledge, skills, and experiences, and encouraging and using those differences to create a productive and effective educational community and workforce.

### **Ethnicity**

A strict definition of an ethnic group is a group regarded as a distinct community by virtue of certain essential characteristics - a shared history which distinguishes it from other groups and a cultural tradition of its own. The expression '*ethnic monitoring*' is used in reference to groups defined by colour, race or national origin as well.

### **Gender**

The word '*gender*' is often used in place of the word '*sex*' in equality issues. '*Gender*' does not appear in legislation (except for '*gender re-assignment*' - see below) but '*sex discrimination*' and '*gender discrimination*' are generally interchangeable.