

TORCH ACADEMY GATEWAY TRUST

Equality Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy deals with the promotion of equality of opportunity for all students at Torch Academy Gateway Trust (TAG) in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, including the 'Public Sector Equality Duty' or 'General Duty' to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- Advance Equality of opportunity between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups, with two 'specific duties' to:
- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty.
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all members and potential members of the TAG community, including: staff, students, members, directors, employer partners, applicants for jobs and courses, contractors and work placement providers.

3. TAG's Core Values

3.1 TAG promotes its Equality Policy through its core values of:

- Respect.
- Integrity.
- Teamwork.
- Excellence.

4. Statement of Policy

4.1 TAG is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and places great value on the diversity of its community. The provision of equality of opportunity and respect for the needs and rights of the individual are fundamental to the values of TAG. TAG fulfils its general and specific duties in relation to equality of opportunity and actively demonstrates due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities, in all strands as identified in the Equality Act 2010, these being:

- a. Age.
- b. Disability.
- c. Gender reassignment.
- d. Pregnancy and maternity.
- e. Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality.
- f. Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief.
- g. Sexual orientation.
- h. Marital status/civil partnerships.
- i. Socio-economic Disadvantage.

TAG will treat all employees, students and other members of the TAG community with respect and dignity, and seek to provide a safe and positive working and learning environment, free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation. TAG is a multi-academy trust, whose academies respect the diverse cultural and religious traditions of all students and staff and accepts the rights of individuals and groups peaceably to worship and to fulfil their cultural obligations. Accordingly, TAG will neither promote, nor permit to be promoted, any one religious faith or culture. Whilst TAG's facilities exist primarily for the delivery of educational activities, arrangements will be made, where practicable, for students and staff to carry out essential religious observance. Dedicated facilities cannot be provided for particular faith groups.

4.2 TAG will publish equality objectives which will represent the Academy's priorities, taking into account national and local priorities and issues. We will evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve outcomes for different groups. We will produce equality data analysis which will inform discussions about the equality objectives.

4.3 TAG academies will each draw up individual and school-specific written three year Accessibility Plans to increase over time accessibility to TAG's facilities, the curriculum and information to disabled students within the resources we can afford. We will provide a portfolio of programmes that enables us to meet a wide range of students' needs, goals and aspirations.

4.4 TAG will ensure:

- a. Students engaged on work placements will be placed with employers who comply with the values and ethos of TAG's Equality Policy.
- b. Procedures for recruiting and selecting staff will be sensitive to, and promote Equality.
- c. Information about its programmes of study and services is made available to the widest possible audience. Publicity materials will be available in a range of formats and will avoid prejudice and stereotyping.
- d. The ethos and environment of TAG enables all students and staff to feel welcome, supported and valued, with access for all to our facilities and services. TAG will encourage students and staff to recognise, understand and value diversity. TAG will actively celebrate the diversity of our community and will develop our students' induction and tutorial programmes so as to enable our students to understand our policy, its implications, and how they can contribute to greater equality of opportunity for all.

5. Training

5.1 TAG will provide training for all staff; members and directors to enable them to understand this policy, participate in its implementation and promote Equality and Diversity. The gender, ethnic origin and socio-economic background of all applicants will be monitored to inform admissions policies and curriculum development. TAG's originated curriculum materials will be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that they do not promote racism, sexism or any other form of discrimination. (An exception may be permitted with the inclusion of materials used for illustrative purposes within the context of the subject being taught). Monitoring will be through moderation of materials such as those submitted for distribution on TAG wide systems and through lesson observation. Other monitoring systems will be introduced as appropriate.

6. Quality Assurance

6.1 TAG's annual Quality Assurance procedures and Quality Systems will require course and support teams to assess and embed equality and diversity issues into their activities and curriculum provision. Course teams will produce action plans showing how they intend to promote equality and diversity. TAG will monitor the effectiveness of the Equality Policy through the following policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

6.4 TAG will consider Equality issues in all aspects of Academy life and business and ensure that all policies and procedures are developed to positively support and develop Equality and Diversity. TAG will develop links and partnerships with external community organisations to support the development of Equality and Diversity in the locality of each of its academies.

7. Breaches of the Policy

7.1 Any student who believes they have experienced discrimination at TAG academies should seek advice and support from their Tutor, or another member of staff. Any student may raise their concerns through TAG's Complaints Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy or the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

7.2 Staff requiring advice when supporting in this situation should contact the Head of School of their academy. Applicants for employment who believe they have experienced or observed discrimination should refer to the HR department or the Complaints Procedure. Any member of staff may raise their concerns through TAG's Grievance Policy and procedures as appropriate. Any Governor or Director who believes they have experienced discrimination should seek advice and support from the Clerk to the TAG Board of Directors.

7.3 Any other members of the TAG community, including applicants for courses, contractors and work placement providers, who believe they have experienced or observed discrimination, should use the Complaints procedure.

8. Responsibilities

8.1 The TAG Board of Directors has responsibility for:

- a. Promoting Equality and Diversity through the establishment of the educational character and ethos of TAG.
- b. Ensuring the TAG complies with legislation and that this policy and related procedures and actions are implemented.
- c. Ensuring that effective policies and procedures are established and robustly monitored.
- d. Ensuring Equality matters and issues for all areas of the Trust's work are identified and discussed and then subsequently delivered, monitored and reported back for the active input of the Board of Directors.
- e. The establishment of an Equality link Director.
- f. Ensuring that equality is embedded throughout the Trust Academies.
- g. Annually reviewing the Equality Policy and evaluating TAG's Equalities' work taking account of quantitative and qualitative evidence.

8.2 The Head of School in each academy has overall responsibility and delegates to the Senior Leadership Team, for:

- a. Ensuring that Equality is continuously promoted and comprehensively implemented in all aspects of TAG's conduct and operation.
 - b. Ensuring anti-discrimination legislation and appropriate codes of practice applying to employment will be adhered to by TAG and its staff.
 - c. Creating a work place where all staff are confident of equitable and fair access to opportunities, development and training and terms and conditions of service.
 - d. Developing a workforce profile that as far as practicable reflects the diverse community at large because TAG values the individual contribution of people irrespective of gender, race, colour, religion or belief, ethnic or national origins, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation or social background.
 - e. Explaining managerial decisions to employees that directly affect them individually or as a group to avoid misunderstanding and to ensure that there is a
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clear understanding about the reasons for the decision in terms of equality and fairness.

- f. Ensuring that all Heads of Department and other managers uphold the values and participate in the development of the policy.
- g. Co-ordinating, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Equality Policy.
- h. Establishing and implementing an annual Single Equality Scheme action plan for the organisation, setting and monitoring Equality Impact Measures.

8.3 The Local Governing Body of each TAG academy is responsible for:

- a. Ensuring that the Academy's employment policies, procedures and practices are implemented in accordance with legislation and with the Academy's Equality Policy.
- b. Producing an annual report on the policy's effectiveness for the Board of Directors at the end of each academic year with the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality.

8.4 Teaching and Support Staff are responsible for:

- a. Promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom.
- b. Challenging prejudice and discrimination.
- c. Dealing fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur.
- d. Planning and delivering curricula and lessons that reflect the Academy's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability.
- e. Maintaining the highest expectations of success for all students.
- f. Supporting different groups of students in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult.
- g. Keeping up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

8.5 All employees of TAG are responsible for:

- a. Acquitting their duty to actively promote Equality in every aspect of their role
- b. Ensuring that they understand and uphold the principles of the Equalities Policy, and will be committed to the development of this strategic initiative through the agreed action plan

- c. Not discriminating in influencing or making a decision in matters of selection, recruitment, employment, promotion, transfer or training
- d. Not victimising other employees because they have made complaints or provided information about alleged incidents of discrimination or harassment
- e. Being aware of their own prejudices and stereotypes and make efforts to contribute constructively to the development of equal opportunities in TAG
- f. Ensuring that discriminatory acts or practices are brought to the attention of their line manager, or another Academy manager if they feel unable to speak to their manager
- g. Ensuring that, in the course of their work, services are provided to all sections of the community fairly and equitably
- h. Being prepared to challenge behaviour, which is inappropriate in terms of discrimination
- i. Making a difference in the development of equal opportunities through customer care initiatives, improved communication, fair recruitment and selection practices, discouraging discriminatory behaviour, thinking from someone else's viewpoint

8.6 All members of the TAG community, including employer partners have a personal responsibility for implementing and applying the Equality Policy. Students and staff are required to treat all members of the TAG community with consideration, respect, showing fairness and honesty. Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated. This zero tolerance approach means they must not:

- a. Demonstrate behaviour which is unwanted, inappropriate, causes distress or is unacceptable to others
- b. Threaten to undermine the safety of themselves or others
- c. Persecute others by intimidation, unfair, sarcastic or malicious behaviour
- d. Illegally or unfairly discriminate against others
- e. Use language which is offensive or disrespectful to others.

9. Checklist

- 9.1 Impact on Students/Staff:
Members of TAG community have the right to:

- a. Effective support for learning in order to success in their personal goals
- b. Be treated fairly in all aspects of their involvement with TAG
- c. Be treated with respect by all members of the TAG community
- d. Be valued for their contribution to the life of TAG in an environment which:
 - i. Encourages each and every person to contribute fully on an equal basis.
 - ii. Promotes a working environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.
 - iii. Promotes a working environment that is supportive of Equality and that takes sensitive, supportive and effective action if discrimination, harassment and/or bullying is suspected.

10. Process of review of effectiveness

- 10.1 The effectiveness of the policy will be reviewed throughout the year by the Senior Leadership Team with achievement of actions monitored against the single equality action plan. The Head of School will produce an annual report on the policy's effectiveness for the local governing body at the end of each academic year.

11. Legal authority

- 11.1 TAG aims to comply with and exceed the requirements of relevant legislation and associated guidelines including:

- Equality Act (2010).
- Special Education Needs and Disability Act (2001).
- Work and Families Act (2006).
- Human Rights Act 1998. (This list is not exhaustive).

12. Links to other policies

- 12.1 The Equality Policy is to be read and adhered to in conjunction with the:
- Anti-Bullying Policy.
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
 - TAG Behaviour Code.
 - Complaints Policy.
 - Disciplinary Capability Grievance and Appeals Policies.