



RISE SPACE Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Version	Policy Created	Review Date
1	28/9/21	28/9/23
Amendment Date	Detail of amendment	Agreed
28/09/23	No amendments	28/09/25
28/08/24	Change of branding and proof read	01/09/26

RISE SPACE is committed to encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time, or full-time

- not lawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms, and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities

The organisation commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity, and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination.

All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public

Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others during the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

Make opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity, and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy are fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with employee representatives.

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found at Policies (risespace.uk) This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually their line manager.

Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

1.0 Introduction

This document sets out how RISE SPACE will meet its obligation under the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 for all employees with regards to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity. The Trust is committed to creating a working environment where all employees are integrated and treated fairly and equally, whilst valuing the diverse differences of each individual and group.

2.0 Definitions and legislation

2.1 Equality

Equality Act (2010) is the key law which prohibits discrimination and promotes equality. It is against the law for anyone to be discriminated based on:

- age; • disability; • gender reassignment; • marriage and civil partnership; • pregnancy and maternity; • race; • religion or belief; • sex; and • sexual orientation.

These are called protected characteristics. There are four forms of discrimination; all of these are against the law. These are:

- Direct discrimination • Indirect discrimination • Harassment • Victimisation. I

Equality in the workplace means equal job and career advancement opportunities and fairness in all situations for current and prospective employees. The law protects employees against discrimination at work, including:

- dismissal • employment terms and conditions • pay and benefits • promotion and transfer opportunities • training • recruitment • redundancy.

2.1.1 Menopause and unfair treatment Menopause is not specifically covered by the Equality Act. Unfair treatment because of menopause can amount to discrimination on the grounds of age, and/or disability and/or sex. This in part depends on severity of symptoms. The Trust will ensure that they do not treat employees less favourably than others and will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments as required. The Trust must also ensure that employees experiencing the menopause are not directly discriminated against. For example, a requirement to wear a uniform made of

uncomfortable, synthetic fabric could indirectly discriminate against an employee experiencing regular menopausal hot flushes on grounds of disabilities and age.

2.2 Diversity

Diversity within a workforce means having a range of employees with different ages, religions, ethnicities, people with and without disabilities, both men and women, people of different sexual orientations and transgender people. It also means valuing those differences and defining all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the distinctive characteristics that make one individual or group different from another.

2.3 Inclusion

An inclusive workplace is a working environment that values the individual and group differences within its work force and ensures diverse employees feel valued, welcome, integrated, and included in the workforce instead of isolated.

3.0 Scope and Purpose of Policy

3.1 Commitment

The Trust is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all employees and job applicants with the primary aim to creating a supportive and inclusive working environment in which all individuals can make best use of their skills, free from discrimination including harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.

The Trust will not discriminate against anyone with any protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. It will build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness, and transparency.

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity within this policy apply to all aspects of the RISE SPACE's relationship with employees and to relations between employees at all levels. These principles will be considered across all aspects of the Trust's operations and functions. The principles of the policy will also apply to the way in which employees and Governors treat visitors, volunteers, contractors, and former employees.

RISE SPACE is committed to a right based approach. This means that it actively promotes ensuring opportunities for people with different protected characteristics to be involved in decisions which affect them.

3.2 Dignity at Work policy

RISE SPACE will consider Equality, Diversity and Inclusive in all their policies, however, to compliment this policy please read in conjunction with the Dignity at Work policy.

3.3 Different religions, cultures, and private and family life

RISE SPACE will make every effort to accommodate the requirements of different religions and cultures and respect individuals' right to private and family life, recognising that this may mean different domestic responsibilities. Please see the following for specific information on our approach to these issues:

- Recruitment Policy and guidelines
- Flexible Working Policy
- Flexible Retirement Policy
- Parental Bereavement Policy
- Special Leave of Absence Policy

3.4 Who is covered by the policy?

The policy is applicable to all employees working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, trainees, apprentices, part-time and fixed term employees, volunteers, casual workers, agency staff, clients, communities, suppliers, and contractors (whether permanent or temporary), visitors, trustees, and all those in governance roles.

The policy applies to all processes relating to employment and training and to any dealings with customers and clients. Decisions relating to customers and communities will be based on business-related criteria only and any irrelevant information will not form part of the process.

4.0 Who is responsible for this policy?

4.1 RISE SPACE ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy with the Governor and Director leading and having overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with anti-discrimination law.

4.2 The Provision Lead is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy, and for ensuring that RISE SPACE discharges its duty under the Equality Act (2010), including obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. This includes ensuring that equality objectives are in place and reported on regularly.

4.3 The Director will be providing overall guidance and advice on matters regarding equal opportunities and will be responsible for reviewing the policy and ensuring its compliance and update to policies.

4.4 Director will nominate a named person responsible for equality including monitoring equality objectives and equal opportunities.

4.5 All managers have responsibility to:

- set an appropriate standard of behaviour,
- lead by example
- ensure their team members adhere to the policy
- promote the aims and objectives of equality, diversity, and inclusivity.

Managers will be given appropriate training on equality and equal opportunities awareness and on best practice with regards to equality, diversity and being inclusive with regards to recruitment and selection.

4.6 All employees are personally responsible for ensuring that they adhere to the policy and promote the aims and objectives of equality, diversity, and inclusivity. All employees have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and always treat colleagues with dignity, and not to discriminate against other employees, regardless of their status.

4.7 In certain circumstances RISE SPACE could be held to be vicariously liable for actions of their employees, however employees should be aware that they may be personally liable if they are found to have discriminated against another person whilst in any trust college or on College/trust-related business. Behaviour, actions, or words that transgress the policy will not be tolerated and, after a full investigation, may be dealt with in line with the Trust's disciplinary policy.

5.0. Forms of discrimination

Discrimination by or against an employee is prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

5.1 Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out by the Equality Act and above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not "fit in" would be direct discrimination.

5.2 Indirect discrimination occurs when a policy, practice or rule which applies equally to everyone disadvantages persons who share protected characteristic(s) or has a worse effect on people with protected characteristic(s) than others. For example, meetings in a pub would disadvantage those whose religious beliefs mean that they do not go to pubs; this would be indirect discrimination on grounds of religion. Although pregnancy and maternity do not explicitly come under the indirect discrimination provisions, they are covered by indirect sex discrimination provisions in the Equality Act 2010.

5.3 Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in the Trust's Dignity at Work policy.

5.4 Victimisation is prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment or supported someone else's complaint. Victimisation is also dealt with further in the Trust's Dignity at Work policy and Whistleblowing policy and procedures.

6.0 Employee Training and Development, promotion, and conditions of service

6.1 Employee training needs are identified through regular appraisals. All employees will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within RISE SPACE and all promotion decisions will be made based on merit.

6.2 Workforce composition and promotions will be regularly monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the Trust. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unjustified barriers and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups. The Trust will continue to work towards ensuring diversity at all levels of the organisation, including at most senior levels and among trustees.

6.3 RISE SPACE conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all employees who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them. Annual pay reviews will be monitored to ensure that no bias or discrimination is applied.

7.0 Discipline and Termination of Employment

7.1 RISE SPACE will ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal, or other disciplinary action.

7.2 RISE SPACE will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

8.0 Protected characteristics

If an employee believes they do have a protected characteristic or they become to have a protected characteristic during their employment, they will be encouraged to disclose this information to their

line manager within their college or location. This will be on the basis that the RISE SPACE will want to support the employee as appropriate to ensure the employee feels included along with having their needs met within the workplace.

If an employee is experiencing difficulties at work because of their protected characteristic, the employee should speak to their line manager in the first instance to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Their line manager may wish to consult with the HR Department with a referral, if necessary, to the Trust's Occupational Health advisor(s) about adjustments. RISE SPACE will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the needs of employees within reason. If an adjustment would not be reasonable the Trust will explain the reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

RISE SPACE will continue to monitor the physical features of our premises to specifically consider 'access to work' and whether they place employees with disabilities, job applicants or visitors at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonable, RISE SPACE will take steps to improve access where necessary.

9.0 Fixed-term employees, Casual and Agency Workers

Taking the principles of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity and where relevant, all fixed-term employees, casual and agency workers, will be offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion, and permanent employment opportunities. Further details are in the RISE SPACE RECRUITMENT policy

10.0 Part-time employees Taking the principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity, the Trust will ensure that part-time employees are considered for progression and have the same opportunity to access benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under RISE SPACE flexible Working Policy.

11.0 Breach of policy

If an employee believes they have been discriminated against; they are encouraged to raise the matter informally with the line manager in the first instance. If the employee is not content with this or they feel unable to do so, they may raise the concern through the RISE SPACE Grievance Procedure. If an employee believes that they may have been subject to harassment or bullying, they are encouraged to raise the matter with their line manager in the first instance.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith may, however, after a full investigation, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

RISE SPACE takes a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy, employees who are found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, after a full investigation, under the RISE SPACE Disciplinary Policy. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal.

12.0 Monitoring and review of the policy

The policy will be reviewed every two years but will be reported on annually to reflect changes in the law, demographics and internal business requirements and a full report will be presented to the senior management team to review the effectiveness of the policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives.

13.0 GDPR Statement Unless stated elsewhere in this policy, the data gathered within this process is processed in line with our Data Protection policy which can be found on our website:
www.risespace.uk/policies