



Thomas Deacon Education Trust

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Unity of Purpose
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TDET Equality & Diversity Policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1. This policy statement will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available official guidance and relevant codes of practice.
- 1.2. The Trustees of Thomas Deacon Education Trust (Trustees) are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all employees and job applicants. We aim to create a supportive and inclusive working environment in which all individuals are able to make the best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.
- 1.3. Allegations of discrimination will be taken seriously and addressed promptly and confidentially wherever possible.
- 1.4. This policy applies to all individuals working at all levels, including senior leaders, employees, part-time and fixed-term staff, volunteers, casual workers, agency staff, and academy committee members (collectively referred to as employees).
- 1.5. All employees are expected to uphold this policy and treat others with dignity and respect. Discrimination or harassment of any kind is not tolerated and may result in disciplinary action.
- 1.6. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time following consultation. Elements of this procedure may be varied as appropriate in any case.

2 Scope and Purpose of the Policy

- 2.1. This policy applies to all aspects of employment, including recruitment, training, promotion, pay, benefits, conduct, discipline and termination.
- 2.2. We will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of different religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities. Please see the following for specific information on our approach to these issues.

3 Protected Characteristics

- 3.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate based on the following characteristics:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Being married or in a civil partnership
 - Pregnancy or maternity
 - Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender reassignment
- 3.2. These are called protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010. Discrimination based on any of these protected characteristics is against the law.

4 Forms of Discrimination

- 4.1. Discrimination may be direct or indirect, intentionally or unintentionally.

- 4.2 Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above.
- 4.3 Indirect discrimination arises where there is a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular protected characteristic more than others and is not justified.
- 4.4 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 TDET Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy.
- 4.5 Victimisation is unfairly treating someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment or supported someone else's complaint.

5 Employee Training, Promotion and Conditions of Service

- 5.1 Managers must model inclusive behaviour and ensure their teams uphold this policy. They will receive training on equality and inclusive recruitment practices.
- 5.2 Employee training needs will be identified through regular continuous development discussions. All employees will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.
- 5.3 TDET's 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.

6 Discipline and Termination

- 6.1 Disciplinary procedures will be applied fairly and consistently, without discrimination.
- 6.2 Redundancy procedures will be objective, transparent, and free from bias.

7 Disability Inclusion

- 7.1 We encourage employees to disclose disabilities so we can provide appropriate support.
- 7.2 If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you should speak to your line manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your line manager may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser/s about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- 7.3 We will review our premises to ensure accessibility for all and remove barriers where reasonable.

8 Fixed-term Employees, Casual and Agency Workers

- 8.1 We will monitor our use of fixed-term employees, casual and agency workers, and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities.

9 Part-time Work

- 9.1 We will monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered equal access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under our TDET Flexible Working Policy.

10 Breaches of this Policy

- 10.1 If you believe that you may have been discriminated against you are encouraged to raise the matter through the TDET Resolution Procedure. If you believe that you may have been subject to harassment or bullying, you are encouraged to raise the matter through the TDET Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy.
- 10.2 Allegations regarding potential breaches of this 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.
- 10.3 Any employee who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action and may constitute gross misconduct.

11 Who is Responsible for this Policy?

- 11.1 The TDET Trust Board has ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy
- 11.2 All employees are responsible for ensuring that they adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. In certain circumstances, the TDET Trust Board could be held to be vicariously liable for the actions of their employees..
- 11.3 Employees are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting Jodie McDonald, TDET Head of HR & OD.