



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

2023 – 2024

Reviewed by	Darrell Bate Director of Maritime Training and Delivery
Last updated	30/09/2023
Review frequency	Annually
Version	1.4
Signed	<i>Darrell Bate</i>

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Mission Statement

We believe in the power of diversity, equality and inclusion in achieving our goals. Our inclusive approach in all that we do ensures we create a positive working culture and environment where all can thrive and reach their potential.

We apply our fair and inclusive approach through the recruitment of our employees and volunteers, the access to our services for seafarers and cadets and the fair treatment of all. We hold strong our values of respect, commitment, loyalty, self-discipline, honesty and integrity and believe in treating others with dignity and compassion. Embracing our culturally rich and diverse community helps us maximise impact for our beneficiaries with kindness and respect.

1. Introduction

This policy sets out our commitment to equality, inclusion and the encouragement and celebration of diversity. People are at the heart of our charity, both in terms of our beneficiaries, (sea cadets and seafarers), and our employees and volunteers, who create the impact on our beneficiaries. We recognise and value our diverse community and leverage the strengths that such diversity offers. Championing equality, diversity and inclusion, (ED&I), ensures we meet our aspiration to be the leading maritime charity for lifelong learning and personal development. ED&I is embedded in all that we do.

Purpose of the policy

We aim to:

- Increase awareness of ED&I issues
- Ensure our people apply ED&I principles in their behavior and work
- Ensure everyone treats each other within the organisation fairly and equally and in line with our values
- Provide an inclusive organisation by attracting individuals from the widest range of backgrounds who reflect the diverse communities within which MSSC operates
- Ensure that no person receives less favourable treatment, or is excluded from benefiting from our services, on the basis of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 defined by law and include: age, disability, gender assignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, and provide evidence of such. Whilst not covered by legislation, we also aim to ensure that we consider additional elements such as social class background and cultural background. We embrace all faiths and none.
- Provide a safe environment free from bullying, harassment or discrimination, in which we value the individual's contributions and differences.
- Remove barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement.

Policy Application

This policy applies to our learners, apprentices and employees (including those on fixed term contracts, on secondment from the MoD or agency and contract staff). It applies to the entire charity including the activities and operations of MSSC, the Sea Cadet Corps (SCC) and Marine Society College (MSC) and is aligned to the framework of current equality and diversity

legislation. All employees and volunteers are responsible for ensuring they are working in line with this policy and failure to follow the policy could lead to formal action.

2. How the policy will be implemented?

All individuals within MSSC, SCC and MSC have a responsibility for the implementation of this policy. MSSC is committed to developing the appropriate E, D & I infrastructure but all individuals within MSSC, SCC and MSC have a responsibility for applying and following this policy by adopting the following key principles:

a) Ensuring that we create an inclusive environment

Individuals should be able to work, learn and develop in an environment where all are shown respect and consideration, and in which the dignity and diversity of each and every individual is maintained and valued. Therefore:

- MSSC is committed to creating an environment where individuals feel included and able to raise their concerns
- Individuals should work in line with our values and ensure they behave in a manner that is respectful to others and is open to the different perspectives and opinions of others.
- Where an individual witnesses inappropriate behaviour, they should challenge it with the individual where they feel comfortable and/or escalate the matter where appropriate or necessary.

b) Equality of opportunity for all

We are committed to equality of opportunity for our young people, volunteers, seafarers and employees. We will not treat anyone unfavourably from any of the protected groups.

We will:

- Provide equal opportunities for all and we will not treat others less favourably. This applies to all elements such as access to training, recruitment, pay, promotion, disciplinary and grievance procedures and termination of employment or volunteer status.
- Ensure selection decisions, when recruiting employees or volunteers, are based on merit alone and all job applicants will receive equal treatment. MSSC has a separate recruitment and selection policy for employees, which reflects its commitment to attracting employees from as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. The policy details the organisation's procedures for ensuring fair and open advertising, interview and selection processes.
- Endeavour to ensure our services/properties are accessible to all. Where possible we will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate differing needs. Being a charity there will always be some financial limitations and constraints towards reasonable adjustments but we will aim to best advise in these circumstances. We review the SCC core syllabus for our young people and volunteers to ensure inclusive learning opportunities and the provision of auxiliary aids and services where possible. We work with our sub-contractors to ensure our Marine Society College learning provision reflects best practice in terms of assisting those with special educational needs or disability (SEND).
- Make every effort to ensure that our promotional information and materials reflect our commitment to equality and diversity in the wider community, both visually and in their content.

c) Preventing bullying, harassment and promoting fair treatment

We recognise that the promotion of positive behaviour and the benefits of equality, diversity and inclusion amongst our staff and stakeholders is more effective than focusing on the outcomes of

negative behaviour. However, we will:

- Ensure that our employees, volunteers, young people and seafarers are treated, and treat others, with dignity and respect and free from behaviour that can be perceived as inappropriate or bullying.
- Ensure that no form of inappropriate behaviour or discrimination (either direct or indirect) will be tolerated.
- Seek to encourage the personal development of positive values and attitudes concerning equality and diversity. The separate Codes of Conduct for employees; and SCC volunteers detail the standards of behaviour and conduct expected of individuals in order to uphold the principles of dignity and fair treatment for all. These documents are complemented by the organisation's policies on anti-bullying, complaints and grievances, which aim to inform and guide staff on what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and the reporting processes for dealing with it.

c) Reporting and monitoring of diversity data

- We are committed to continuous improvement in our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion monitoring and recognise the importance of data collation and monitoring, and evidencing the impact of our approach.
- We are committed to data protection regarding this sensitive data.
- We will ensure appropriate audit and assurances are in place where appropriate and consider external quality standards.

3. Responsibilities

All individuals working or volunteering their services for, or on behalf of, MSSC are expected to abide by the principles of the policy. The policy will be promoted and endorsed at all levels of the organisation. Specific responsibilities at each level of the organisation are shown below:

- a. MSSC trustees.**
 - Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion on behalf of the organisation.
 - Ensuring MSSC complies with its legal obligations in respect of equality, diversity and inclusion legislation and that effective policies and procedures are in place.
- b. CEO and senior management team**
 - Providing leadership on equality, diversity and inclusion issues.
 - Ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are promoted and implemented in all aspects of the organisation's work.
- c. Captain of the Sea Cadets and Director of Operations (CSC).**
 - Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion within the SCC.
- d. Director of Maritime Training and Development (DMTD).**
 - Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion within Marine Society College.
- e. All MSSC employees and SCC volunteers.**
 - Promoting the values of the policy within the organisation and Sea Cadet units.
 - Ensuring they understand their responsibilities within the policy.
 - Ensuring that others are protected from harassment, bullying and discrimination
 - Taking action against those who unfairly discriminate.

4. Breaches of the policy

Any breach of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure or Bullying & Harassment Policy. Complaints will be investigated as appropriate.