

# **THE FORTUNE CENTRE OF RIDING THERAPY**

## **The Equality & Diversity Policy for Students (Last updated 30 October 2006)**

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### **Other References**

The FCRT Race Equality Policy  
General Policies File  
The Equality and Diversity Policy for Staff

## **Policy Statement**

The FCRT is committed to Equality of Opportunity through all the activities it undertakes to support education, training and employment. This commitment extends to applicants, students, staff, volunteers and visitors regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, employment status, marital status, or any disability.

The FCRT is also committed to the promotion of practices and procedures, which will ensure equality of opportunity and aims to eliminate any which unfairly discriminate, directly or indirectly.

These commitments demonstrate the FCRT's goal to provide an environment where equality of opportunity prevails, and discrimination is challenged in order to allow all staff and learners to achieve their full potential.

## **Application of the Statement to education and services for students**

1. The FCRT recognises its legal obligations under:
  - The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) & Special Educational Needs & Disability Act (2001)
  - The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
  - The Sex Discrimination Acts (1975 & 1986).
  
2. The FCRT will:
  - regularly review its policies and practices to ensure that publicity, admissions, the curriculum, teaching, assessment and achievement, care, therapies and support services reflect the FCRT Equality and Diversity Policy
  - monitor the student population and applicants to evaluate equality of access to the curriculum and other services
  - provide an environment and resources which reflect the diversity of the students, and the value and potential which the FCRT sees in each individual
  - provide students with clear guidelines on acceptable standards of behaviour, and the ethos and procedures which will empower students to challenge situations in which they feel equality of opportunity has been undermined or denied
  - the policy statement is issued to all staff and students and prominently displayed through the FCRT sites

- encourage all students, staff, volunteers and visitors to apply this policy and practices and provide an environment where equality of opportunity prevails and discrimination is challenged
- prepare and implement action plans to address issues identified by the monitoring activities

## **Equality and Diversity in Practice**

### **1. Race Equality**

The FCRT is committed to promoting equality of opportunity which includes good race relations and avoiding racial discrimination. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a general duty on colleges to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different ethnic groups

The specific duty on colleges requires them to:

- agree a written statement of policy for promoting race equality
- have in place arrangements for fulfilling, as soon as is practicable, its statutory duties
- assess the operation and impact of all its policies, including its race equality policy, on staff, students and others and in particular, on achievement rates of students
- monitor, by reference to racial groups, the recruitment and career progress of staff
- include in its Race Equality Policy an indication of the arrangements for publishing the policy and communicating the results of its monitoring activity under the policy

### **2. Disability Discrimination**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, aimed to ensure that disabled people have equal opportunities to benefit from, and contribute to, the learning and services available in colleges.

Under the Act the Governing Body is the responsible body which is legally liable for the actions on the college as a whole and for individual employees and others such as contractors or agents acting on behalf of the College. The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled applicants, potential applicants or students.

Discrimination can take place in either of two ways:

- by treating them less favorably than other people, or
- by failing to make a 'reasonable adjustment' when the disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other people

Colleges are expected to make 'anticipatory adjustments', not simply wait until a disabled user requires a particular adaptation.

### **3. Sex Discrimination**

The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) applies equally to women and men and makes sex discrimination unlawful in employment and vocational training, education, the provision and sale of goods, facilities and services and premises.

#### Legal Implications

There are 2 kinds of unlawful sex discrimination: 1) direct and 2. indirect.

*Direct discrimination* – is where a person is or would be treated less favourably than another on the grounds of his or her sex.

*Indirect discrimination* – consists of treatment which although apparently neutral, in practice disproportionately disadvantages one sex more than the other.

### **4. Responsibilities**

#### **4.1 The Governing Body**

Trustees are responsible for:

- making sure the FCRT complies with legal requirements and meets all its duties, including the general and specific duties
- making sure the Equality & Diversity Policy and its procedures are followed

#### **4.2 The Director**

The Director is responsible for:

- giving a consistent and high-profile lead on equality and diversity issues
- promoting the Equality & Diversity Policy inside and outside the the FCRT
- making sure the Equality and Diversity Policy and its procedures are followed

#### **4.3 Heads of Department**

All Heads of Department are responsible for:

- putting the policy and its strategies and procedures into practice
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive support and training in carrying these out
- following the relevant procedures and taking action against students and staff who unlawfully discriminate against others

#### **4.4 All Staff**

All staff are responsible for:

- dealing with discriminatory incidents, and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- promoting equality of opportunity and good relations, and avoiding unlawful discrimination against others
- keeping up-to-date with the FCRT policy on equality and diversity, and taking up training and learning opportunities.

### **5. The FCRT Publicity & External Relations**

- 5.1 The FCRT publicity material will reflect positive images of differing abilities, gender and ethnic origin, according to authentic demand by students who meet the course criteria
- 5.2 The FCRT's facilities and services will be provided equitably to all students, irrespective of cognitive ability, physical disability, mode of communication or pattern of behaviour
- 5.3 Relationships with external agencies, eg health and social services, will conform to this policy
- 5.4 It is the intention for publications such as the FCRT prospectus, advertisements and student/ parent handbook to have an equal opportunities statement contained within
- 5.5 The FCRT will actively seek closer links with those groups in society who may be disadvantaged or under-represented in their access to further education.

### **6. The FCRT's Environment and Facilities**

- 6.1 Areas of the FCRT will be accessible to people with disabilities
- 6.2 The FCRT's facilities and services will be provided equitably to all students, irrespective of cognitive ability, physical disability or mode of communication

- 6.3 Images displayed in the FCRT will reflect positively the social and cultural diversity of the the FCRT and will counteract stereotypes
- 6.4 Offensive or stereotypical images will not be displayed in any area in the the FCRT although Senior Staff may determine what is acceptable in the privacy of any student's study bedroom.
- 6.5 An area will be made available for religious worship or observance, and as far as possible will be made available and acceptable to students of various faiths
- 6.6 The physical environment of the FCRT will be maintained so that a sense of inclusive well-being, confidence and security will be ensured for students, staff, volunteers and visitors
- 6.7 Catering services will reflect and recognise diverse dietary and cultural needs and preferences, and will be accessible to all users.

## **7. Behaviour**

- 7.1 The FCRT is committed to the eradication of discriminatory behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and all complaints will be investigated and treated seriously according to the FCRT's grievance procedure.
- 7.2 Unacceptable behavior that is targeted at a person/group's gender, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual preference etc. includes:
  - *Unwanted physical contact* eg touching, patting, pinching, brushing against another person's body, insulting or abusive behaviour or gestures, physical threats, assault, coerced sexual intercourse or rape
  - *Unwanted verbal conduct* eg unwelcome advances, patronizing titles or nicknames, propositions or remarks, innuendos, lewd comments, jokes, banter or abusive language, repeated suggestions for unwanted social activities inside or outside the workplace
  - *Unwanted non-verbal conduct* eg offensive graffiti, abusive or offensive gestures, leering, whistling, display of pornographic or suggestive literature, pictures or films/ videos or inappropriate use of visual display units (VDUs) or network systems for this purpose
  - *Bullying*, including persistent criticism, personal abuse and/or ridicule, which humiliates or demeans the individual involved, gradually eroding his/ her self confidence.

- 7.3 The FCRT will require all staff to be familiar with its Equality and Diversity Policy for both themselves and the students, and to conduct themselves in accordance with its principles.
- 7.4 No student shall be discriminated against through any attitude, or in respect of any activity, service or opportunity because of an instance of misconduct for which the appropriate sanction has been applied.

## **8. The Curriculum**

- 8.1 Learning materials will show and use images of a range of people.
- 8.2 The FCRT materials will be free from prejudice, in assumptions, images and language
- 8.3 Teaching staff will be expected to monitor learning materials as described in above 2 points. (see 5.1 also)
- 8.4 Syllabuses, examination materials and course guidelines will be reviewed and where appropriate representations will be made to awarding or examining bodies to produce materials and procedures which support the FCRT's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 8.5 Staff will be encouraged to review their practices and techniques to encourage student learning, ensuring that they meet the needs of the individual students and are free from bias or any form of discrimination
- 8.6 The FCRT and its staff will ensure as far as possible that assessment methods do not disadvantage some groups of learners
- 8.7 As far as possible the FCRT will monitor learner achievement to ensure that the various aspects of inequality do not adversely affect this
- 8.8 Specifically, in relation to 8.1-8.5 tutors will seek to ensure that every reasonable effort is made to avoid a format, language or approach which, in relation to student's gender, age, racial origin, religious persuasion, sexual orientation or disability:
- is offensive to members of particular groups
  - is not capable of being readily understood by some students
  - does not have the same meaning for all students
  - implies stereotyped or biased attitudes
  - assumes experiences which not all students have had
  - describes contexts which are not equally meaningful to all students

- includes terms or concepts or forms of presentation which are unfamiliar to some groups of students
  - employs techniques that are easier for some groups of students to use
  - requires activities which cannot be performed by all students
- 8.9 Guidance, counseling and careers services offered to all students will apply principles of equality and anti-discriminatory practice, confidentiality and respect for the individual and their right to make informed, autonomous choice
- 8.10 As far as possible, students should have the opportunity to gain work experience. The FCRT should seek actively to encourage employers to adopt a positive approach to students on work placement regardless of age, gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or disability
- 8.11 Where work experience cannot be made available, for whatever reason, the student should be informed promptly and clearly in the appropriate way, and alternatives should be explored and provided which simulate aspects of the world of work
- 8.12 Learning support should be made available to each student on the basis of need. Support should reflect respect for the individual, gender, culture, age, ethnic origin etc. This applies to referral, assessment, provision and the speed of procedures for identifying need.
- 8.13 Off-site curricular activities, such as independent travel training, residential work experience or trips, will be provided equitably to all students unless reasonable adjustment cannot be made, eg where health and safety considerations cannot be overcome or when a student's individual learning needs are incompatible with the experience
- 8.14 The FCRT will provide equal access to appropriate social, cultural, creative, sports and leisure experiences for all students according to their individual needs.

## **9. Student Admission Procedures**

- 9.1 Admission procedures from the first contact, will promote equality and counter discrimination.
- 9.2 Patterns of student placement applications and admissions will be monitored and procedures reviewed to ensure that the student population reflects the composition of the applicant population and the FCRT's aims.

## **10. Induction & curriculum options**

- 10.1 All students and parents will be made aware of the Equality & Diversity Policy and their rights under the Grievance Procedure through the student/parent handbook
- 10.2 The curriculum will be discussed with students clearly and effectively (ie using the appropriate form of communication)

## **11. Equine Assisted Therapy, Education, Care, Medical Treatment and Other Services**

- 11.1 The FCRT provision will conform to the Equality and Diversity Policy and will be provided equitably to all students according to their individual needs and within the context of the funding agreement
- 11.2 Where a treatment or service cannot be provided for any reason, eg because it falls outside of the funding agreement, or would infringe the rights of other students, this will be clearly explained and alternatives explored with the student and /or parents
- 11.3 The provision of equine assisted therapy, education, care, medical treatment and other services will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that it complies with the Equality and Diversity Policy and Race Equality, Disability and Sex Discrimination legislation.