



HELOA Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Author:	Dawn McClintock
Contributors:	UK Committee
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Aims

It is important to HELOA to be a fair and inclusive charity. We are set up to encourage potential students from all backgrounds to consider higher education, and recognise that our beneficiaries are a culturally rich and diverse group.

HELOA is open to all student recruitment, outreach and widening participation, marketing and admissions staff in higher education in the UK as both members and volunteers. We are committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our members and volunteers, eliminating unlawful discrimination, and doing what we can to remove barriers to access and participation in our events and processes. A diverse committee and membership is both an aim and end in itself, and will help our charity be as creative, innovative and effective as it can be.

Purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all our members, staff volunteers and embed the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in our organisation.
2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage or civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation

3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:
 - a. Election and appointment of volunteers
 - b. Dealing with grievances and complaints
4. Reduce barriers to participation, with our opportunities open for all of our members, listening to and considering the needs and requirements of a diverse membership.
5. Comply with recommended practice on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Charity Governance Code in a transparent manner.
6. Create and nurture a safe, inclusive and equal environment, based on mutual respect and valuing and recognising difference, in which all of our members and volunteers can thrive.

Commitments

HELOA is committed to:

1. Encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion across the charity as they provide a good foundation for our aims and objectives and help us make better decisions. This includes taking expert advice on board, and undertaking regular reviews and research into best practice.
2. Creating an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all members and volunteers are recognised and valued.
Sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks and behaviour are not acceptable. These constitute harassment, and have no place in HELOA.
3. Assessing the impact of policies and practices to identify, remove or mitigate any disadvantage to underrepresented groups or recognise any cultural or religious sensitivity or difference.
4. Making reasonable adjustments, as appropriate, to our training opportunities and conferences, to remove barriers to attendance for members with disabilities or additional needs.
We ensure all our conferences are run in venues that are accessible for those with mobility impairments including wheelchair users, have appropriate prayer facilities, and cater to a variety of dietary needs.
We always share notes and other resources from training events with the full membership for those who are unable to attend in person, are also working towards offering more remote access to our training opportunities.
The committee will work to identify situations where people with a protected characteristic may suffer disadvantage, compared to people without. We will endeavour to prevent such disadvantage (or, if this is not possible, to minimise it), and will take reasonable steps to explore accessibility and inclusion requests,

considering timescales, financial implications and equitable distribution of charitable funds, and physical limitations of booked venues.

5. Making decisions concerning volunteers and committee members based on merit. We employ name-blind applications for all of our member-elected roles to help ensure that our representatives are selected purely based on their qualities and experience.
6. Making meetings accessible and looking into providing resources to support this. Including creating an environment in which behaving inclusively is the norm and all voices are equal and members and trustees can constructively challenge each other.
Resources used in meetings and sessions will be available in accessible formats.
7. Reviewing our practices and procedures regularly to ensure they are appropriate, effective, fair and take into account any changes to the law. This policy will be reviewed at least every 2 years.

Dealing with discrimination and harassment

HELOA will take complaints of discrimination and harassment very seriously and investigate them thoroughly. The individual making the complaint will be allowed to speak in a safe environment about their experience.

If the complaint is against a particular individual, the executive committee will also hear their point of view. If the complaint is against an executive committee member, that member will not be involved in conducting the investigation.

If the complaint is against the organisation as a whole, the committee must work to ensure that such discrimination is not repeated in the future, and must inform the members of how they propose to do this.

The committee will decide what action to take based on the principle of ensuring the continued inclusion and safety of any member who has experienced discrimination or harassment. Any decision to terminate someone's membership will be made in line with the rules set out in the constitution.