



## Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy Owner Marianna Cilia

Policy Reviewed Date 11 October 2016

Due for Review October 2019 (but monitoring data: October 2017)

Valence School is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Our aim is to recruit, promote and carry out any other employment decision on the basis of merit, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best. The School also endeavours to represent the area in which it is located and the students it serves, as far as possible.

Valence School - is committed to avoid unlawful discrimination of staff, parents, students and the public. With regards to meeting the needs of disabled students, the School has an Accessibility Plan which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
- not unlawfully 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 (gender) and sexual orientation
- not unlawfully discriminate against an employee or colleague who is perceived as having the protected characteristics as above or who is associated with someone who has the perceived characteristics as above
- oppose, avoid and eliminate 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
- under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to advance equality of opportunities and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The organisation commits to:

- encourage equality and diversity 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 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 in the course of the organisation's work activities

Such acts will be investigated and dealt with under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any 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

- create 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
- make decisions concerning staff based on merit
- review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also 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, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality policy (Appendix 1 refers)
- assess how the equality policy and any supporting action plan are working in practice
- under the PSED to publish equality information annually. Valence data and composition of workforce is attached under Appendix 2

Under the PSED the equality objectives are:

- to increase the number of male employees working with students, to give the same choice that girls have for their care needs to be met by women so that boys can have their care needs met by men if they wish
- to provide bathing facilities for students

The equality policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with the Staff Council. Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, if applicable, does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

## Appendix 1

# Equality and diversity monitoring form

**Valence School** wants to meet the aims and commitments set out in its equality policy. This includes not discriminating under the Equality Act 2010, and building an accurate picture of the make-up of the workforce in encouraging equality and diversity.

The organisation needs your help and co-operation to enable it to do this, but filling in this form is voluntary.

The information you provide will stay confidential, and be stored securely and limited to only some staff in the organisation's Human Resources section.

Please return the completed form in the envelope marked 'Strictly confidential' to **the Human Resources Department**

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**Gender** Male  Female  Prefer not to say

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**Are you married or in a civil partnership?** Yes  No  Prefer not to say

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**Age** 16-24  25-29  30-34  35-39  40-44  45-49   
50-54  55-59  60-64  65+  Prefer not to say

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### What is your ethnicity?

Ethnic origin is not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. It is about the group to which you perceive you belong. Please tick the appropriate box

#### **White**

English  Welsh  Scottish  Northern Irish  Irish

British  Gypsy or Irish Traveller  Prefer not to say

Any other white background, please write in:

#### **Mixed/multiple ethnic groups**

White and Black Caribbean  White and Black African  White and Asian

Prefer not to say  Any other mixed background, please write in:

#### **Asian/Asian British**

Indian  Pakistani  Bangladeshi  Chinese  Prefer not to say

Any other Asian background, please write in:

#### **Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British**

African  Caribbean  Prefer not to say

Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please write in:

#### **Other ethnic group**

Arab  Prefer not to say  Any other ethnic group, please write in:

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**Do you consider yourself to have a disability or health condition?**

Yes  No  Prefer not to say

What is the effect or impact of your disability or health condition on your ability to give your best at work? Please write in here:

The information in this form is for monitoring purposes only. If you believe you need a 'reasonable adjustment', then please discuss this with your manager, or the manager running the recruitment process if you are a job applicant.

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**What is your sexual orientation?**

Heterosexual  Gay woman/lesbian  Gay man  Bisexual

Prefer not to say  If other, please write in:

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**What is your religion or belief?**

No religion or belief  Buddhist  Christian  Hindu  Jewish

Muslim  Sikh  Prefer not to say  If other religion or belief, please write in:

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**What is your current working pattern?**

Full-time  Part-time  Prefer not to say

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**Do you have caring responsibilities? If yes, please tick all that apply**

None  Primary carer of a child/children (under 18)

Primary carer of disabled child/children

Primary carer of disabled adult (18 and over)  Primary carer of older person

Secondary carer (another person carries out the main caring role)

Prefer not to say

**The information in this form is for monitoring purposes only.**

Appendix 2

**STAFF (253) - September 2016**

**Gender**

85% Female  
15% Male

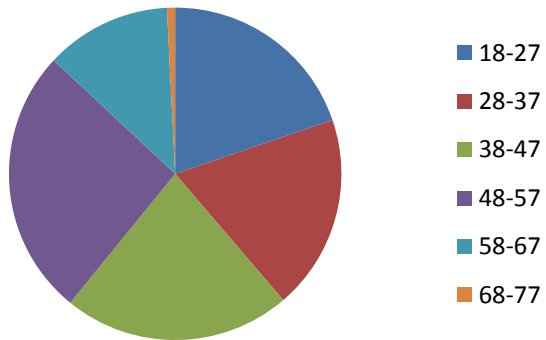
**Disability**

79% Not disabled  
3% Disabled  
18% Not Known/declined

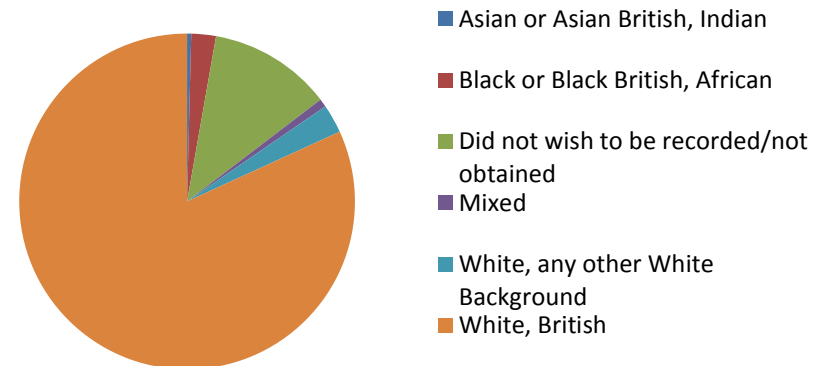
**Ethnicity**

0% Asian or Asian British, Indian  
2% Black or Black British, African  
12% Did not wish to be recorded/not obtained  
1% Mixed  
3% White, any other White Background  
82% White, British

**Age distribution**



**Ethnicity**



**STUDENTS (97) - September 2016**

**Gender**

34% Female  
66% Male

**Ethnicity**

1% Asian/ Chinese  
2% Black  
4% Mixed  
8% White, any other background  
85% White, British