

Equality and Diversity Policy



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1. COLAT commitment to equality of opportunity

City of London Academies Trust is committed to delivering on the principles of justice in all its employment. In accordance with our vision and values, COLAT has:

- a passion to include everyone
- a desire to treat everyone equally, respecting differences
- a commitment to healthy and open relationships
- a great sense of hope that things can change and be transformed
- a sense of perseverance to keep going for the long haul

COLAT willingly accepts not only our legal responsibilities, we also wish to embrace best practice in all areas of our work in order to secure equality and fairness of both treatment and outcome for all. We are therefore committed to ensuring that no-one is treated in any way less favourably on the grounds of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race, colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. These are referred to in this document as Protected Characteristics. Further information is provided in Appendix 1. Discriminatory behaviour, homophobic and other discriminatory bullying and hate crime are unacceptable.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff who are:

- Current employees
- Former employees
- Staff who are on atypical contracts, such as agency workers, staff on casual contracts and those on fixed term contracts
- Self-employed staff working personally for COLAT
- Job applicants
- Volunteers including Trust Board and Local Governing Body Members
- Trainees on placement

These groups are protected against discrimination as follows:

- Employees- including the terms and conditions on which they are employed, any benefits offered, opportunities for promotion and training, termination of employment and the right not to be subjected to any detriment.
- Former employees- it is unlawful to discriminate against a former employee by, for example, the provision of a discriminatory reference.
- Contract, casual and agency workers- including the terms on which the work is offered, general treatment, access to facilities or benefits, termination, and the right not to be subjected to any detriment.
- Self-employed people where the contract requires them to carry out the work personally- including the terms on which the work is offered, general treatment, access to facilities or benefits, termination of their employment contract and the right not to be subjected to any detriment.
- Job applicants - throughout the process of recruitment. This includes the arrangements for determining who is appointed, the terms of the job description and the person specification, advertising, short-listing, interviewing, selection and the terms and conditions of employment offered.

- Volunteers - is an individual who undertakes certain tasks on behalf of a specific body without seeking any payment for this task, their general treatment, access to facilities or benefits, and the right not to be subjected to any detriment.
- Trainees on Placement - is an individual who undertakes training through a relevant education body without seeking any payment for this task, their general treatment, access to facilities or benefits, and the right not to be subjected to any detriment.

Protection from discrimination applies to workers' behaviour in the course of their employment for COLAT. This therefore includes all behaviour while at work, at any work-related social functions or gatherings and on business trips either in the UK or abroad.

3. Unacceptable behaviour

COLAT will not accept any behaviour by its staff which:

- Is directly discriminatory
- Is indirectly discriminatory
- Discriminates against an employee, former-employee or job applicant because of his or her disability
- Fails to make reasonable adjustments to help the employee, former employee or job applicant, where s/he has a disability
- Is harassment
- Is victimization
- Is an attempt to get someone to discriminate against, harass or victimize another on the above protected grounds, or
- Is harassment by a third party, which we have not tried to prevent

These types of unacceptable actions are explained below:

Direct discrimination is treating a person less favourably than another because of any of the protected characteristics. It can also occur where someone is subjected to discriminatory treatment because of another person's protected characteristic, e.g. where an employee is penalised for taking time off work to care for a disabled child. Further, a complaint of direct discrimination can be made where the discriminatory treatment is due to a mistaken perception that the victim possesses a particular characteristic.

Indirect discrimination occurs where a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to everyone, but where the application of the provision results in a disadvantage to people with a particular protected characteristic (e.g. people of a minority ethnic origin or younger people) and where an individual is put at a disadvantage as a result. Examples can be requiring all job applicants to work full-time when this is not necessary – such a requirement will have a disproportionate effect on women (who tend to have more childcare responsibilities than men) and disabled people, and so indirectly discriminate against these groups of people.

Discrimination 'arising from disability' will be unlawful unless justified. Additionally, a failure to make adjustments in respect of a disabled employee or job applicant will be unlawful unless it can be demonstrated either that there were no adjustments that it could have made that would have helped the employee or applicant, or that any adjustments that could have been made would not have been reasonable.

Harassment is where unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic occurs which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. The wording makes it clear that the question

of whether or not behaviour constitutes harassment depends largely on the perception of the person on the receiving end. Thus, it does not matter what the harasser thinks or intended by their behaviour, or even what colleagues think. Nor is it necessary for the particular behaviour to be targeted at the individual who finds it offensive. A common excuse for harassment is that it was just 'banter', but one person's idea of a joke may be seen as offensive and intimidating by others. Complaints of harassment may be based on a single, serious incident or (as is more common) a series of incidents of unacceptable behaviour, particularly if they continue after the employee has made it clear that the behaviour is unwanted or offensive.

There is also a duty to prevent harassment by third parties where there have been at least two previous occasions. The harassment does not have to be by the same third party. Examples can be harassment by parents, students, suppliers or contractors, in or outside the workplace. Victimisation occurs where a person is treated less favourably or suffers a detriment because they have brought discrimination proceedings, given evidence in a tribunal, complained internally of discrimination or assisted someone else in their complaint. An example could be a refusal to consider someone for promotion because they had previously made an allegation of sex discrimination.

4. Rights and responsibilities

All COLAT staff have a duty to treat each other with dignity and respect and in accordance with our vision and values, as well as this policy. It is a requirement of our person specification that job applicants have knowledge and understanding of our Equality and Diversity policy.

COLAT will offer training and support to ensure that Board and Local Governing Body members and all Trust workers are aware of their rights and responsibilities under this policy, focusing in particular on staff who serve on selection panels, line managers and senior management. All employees will be encouraged to receive training offered on the policy generally and it will be a focus for induction of new employees.

COLAT provides a Grievance policy and procedure for dealing with any concerns or complaints that may arise about equality issues.

5. Breaches of the policy

Any breaches of this policy will be dealt with under COLAT grievance policy and procedure or, where appropriate, under COLAT whistleblowing procedure. The grievance procedure has three stages. The first is informal; stages two and three are formal, with the third stage being a right of appeal.

Employees with a concern or complaint are encouraged wherever possible to deal with the issue informally first, directly with the individual concerned. If this is not possible or has not resolved the issue to the complainant's satisfaction, action can be taken at the formal stage. Employees have the right to be accompanied by his/her trade union representative, workplace representative or work colleague at formal meetings under the policy.

Action may also be taken under COLAT Disciplinary Policy where breaches of the policy are found to have taken place.

6. Relationship to other policies

This policy affects all aspects of employment with COLAT, from recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, training and development, promotion, performance, grievance, discipline, and treatment of workers when their contract or involvement with COLAT has come to an end.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Trust policies, where full details of each specific area are given: Pay Policy, Safer Recruitment and Selection, Absence Management, Capability Procedure, Maternity, Paternity, Adoption & Shared Parental Leave, Disciplinary, Grievance, Managing Change and Redundancy, Health and Safety, Performance Management and Bullying and Harassment Policy.

7. Responsibility for the policy

The COLAT Board is responsible for the policy and for its implementation and regular review.

8. Implementation and monitoring and review

COLAT will undertake the following actions in to ensure that we embed this policy at the heart of the organisation and will:

- Implement a standard monitoring framework, as set out in Annex B.
- Collecting standard information on an annual basis about our workforce will enable us to assess whether this policy is effective in practice, in providing equal opportunity for all.
- Devise and implement a training plan for all employees, new employees on induction, those who serve on selection panels, line managers and senior management.
- Communicate this policy to employees across the organisation, through the intranet, email, bulletin boards and staff meetings.
- Review the main people policies which have a bearing on equalities issues, to ensure that action is consistent in reinforcing our commitment to equality in these areas. In particular, we will review the following key policies annually, given their impact on equality and diversity issues:
 - Pay
 - Recruitment and Selection
 - Absence Management
 - Capability
 - Family Leave
 - Maternity/Paternity/Adoption/Family Leave
 - Disciplinary
 - Grievance
 - Redundancy
 - Health and Safety
 - Performance Management, and
 - Bullying and Harassment.
- Review as a priority our procedures for becoming aware of and responding to harassment of our employees by third parties
- Undertake a periodic Equal Pay Review
- Undertake periodic Equality Impact Assessments on key changes including by using the data collected above, thereby considering the quality consequences as part of decision making.
- Invite existing employee representatives from the recognised trade unions and staff from across the organisation to volunteer to act as equality champions, to serve as advisers to the Trust HR department in keeping equality updating policies to ensure compliance with this policy
- Review this policy on an annual basis or sooner if legislation changes, setting specific targets for action in the next version when benchmark data has been obtained.

Appendix 1 Definition of protected characteristics

Age

This refers to a person having a particular age (for example, 32-year olds) or being within an age group (for example, 18-30 year-olds).

Disability

1. A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
2. Some people are automatically treated as disabled:
 - from the point of diagnosis in the case of those suffering from cancer, HIV and MS
 - or if they are certified blind, severely sight impaired, sight impaired or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist
 - or if they have a severe disfigurement, provided they meet the long-term requirement and depending on where it is
3. For other progressive conditions (e.g. systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), various types of dementia, rheumatoid arthritis, and motor neurone disease) the person will meet most of the definition when the impairment starts to adversely affect her/his ability to undertake day to day activities – provided that s/he meets the long-term aspect of the definition
4. A person can also qualify if s/he had a disability in the past and/or if s/he was on the register of disabled persons under provisions in the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944 on both 12 January 1995 and 2 December 1996.

The key issue is the effect of a condition, not its cause. If a person avoids doing things due to their impairment, this can count towards the definition.

“Long term” means:

- has lasted at least 12 months, or
- the total period for which it lasts, from the time of the first onset, is likely to be at least 12 months, or
- is likely to last for the rest of the affected person’s life

If treatment permanently cures a condition, the likelihood of recurrence must be assessed. However, if the treatment simply delays or prevents a recurrence, and a recurrence would be likely if the treatment stopped, as is the case with most medication, then the treatment is to be ignored and the effect is to be regarded as likely to recur.

Gender reassignment

This characteristic applies to people who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process (or part of a process) to reassign their sex.

Gender reassignment is a personal process, that is, moving away from one’s birth sex to the preferred gender, rather than a medical process.

Someone does not have to undergo medical treatment in order to be protected. The Equality Act requires that a person should have at least proposed to undergo gender reassignment. It does not require such a proposal to be irrevocable.

The worker/applicant may also be protected under disability discrimination provisions if has been diagnosed with gender dysphoria or gender identity disorder.

Gender reassignment is a separate protected characteristic and unrelated to sexual orientation.

There are a number of related terms: “Trans”, “Transgender” and “Transsexual”:

- Trans: the term “trans people” and “transgender people” are both often used as umbrella terms for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex, including transsexual people (those who propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process of gender reassignment to live permanently in their acquired gender), transvestite/cross-dressing people(those who wear clothing traditionally associated with the other gender either occasionally or more regularly), androgyne/polygender people (those who have non-binary gender identities and do not identify as male or female), and others who define as gender variant
- Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex. They may or may not seek to undergo gender reassignment hormonal treatment/surgery. Often used interchangeably with “trans”.
- Transsexual: a person who intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (which may or may not involve hormone therapy or surgery).

Marriage and civil partnership

Legal protection is not applied to those who are unmarried/single or those who have divorced or whose civil partnership has been dissolved. However, COLAT takes all forms of unjustified discriminatory treatment seriously, whether or not it is prohibited by law.

Pregnancy and maternity

The protected period starts when the worker becomes pregnant and continues until the end of the maternity leave or until she returns to work if that is earlier.

A woman undergoing IVF is legally pregnant after a fertilised embryo has been implanted and from that point is protected from unfavourable treatment because of her pregnancy, including pregnancy related sickness.

Race

Race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

Nationality is distinct from national origins.

“Ethnic group” is defined by the courts as having “a long shared history and a cultural tradition of its own. In addition, an ethnic group may have one or more of the following characteristics: a common language; a common literature; a common religion; a common geographical origin; or being an oppressed group.” The courts have confirmed that the following are protected ethnic groups: Sikhs, Jews, Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers, Scottish Gypsies and Scottish Travellers.

Religion or belief

This includes any religion and any religious or philosophical belief. It also includes a lack of any such religion or belief.

Sex

Does not include gender reassignment or sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation

This means a person’s sexual orientation towards:

- Persons of the same sex (that is, the person is a gay man or a lesbian)
- Persons of the opposite sex (that is, the person is heterosexual); or
- Persons of either sex (that is, the person is bisexual)

Sexual orientation relates to how people feel as well as their actions.

Appendix 2

City of London Academies Trust – Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

COLAT is working towards equality of opportunity for all who apply for employment with the organisation. We are actively opposed to discrimination and want to ensure our processes support recruitment of the full diversity of people. We believe that monitoring our recruitment results will help us assess any areas requiring improvement. To assist us with this, we would be grateful if you would complete this form and return it with your application.

COLAT undertakes that this form will not be made available to anyone involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and will remain confidential to the Human Resources function to be used solely for the purpose monitoring the effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy.

Your help in this matter is entirely voluntary and will in no way affect your application.

Position Applied For

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Gender

<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
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Age Range

<input type="checkbox"/> 16-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-29	<input type="checkbox"/> 30-39	<input type="checkbox"/> 40-49	<input type="checkbox"/> 50-59	<input type="checkbox"/> 60-64	<input type="checkbox"/> 65+
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Ethnic Origin

Ethnic origin is not about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. It is to do with colour and broad ethnic group. UK citizens can belong to any of the groups indicated below.

A.	White	<input type="checkbox"/> British A1	<input type="checkbox"/> Irish A2	<input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background* A3
B.	Mixed	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean B1		<input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African B2
		<input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian B3		<input type="checkbox"/> Any other Mixed background* B4
C.	Asian or Asian British	<input type="checkbox"/> Indian C1	<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani C2	<input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi C3
		<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese E1	<input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background* C4	
D.	Black or Black British	<input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean D1	<input type="checkbox"/> African D2	<input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background* D3
E.	Other Ethnic Groups	<input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy or Traveller E5		<input type="checkbox"/> Any other Ethnic group* E2
		<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say E3		
* Please specify here				

Sexual Orientation

<input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual/Straight	<input type="checkbox"/> Gay/Lesbian	<input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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Religion and Beliefs

Please select one religion that is most suitable;					
<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/> Christian	<input type="checkbox"/> Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/> Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/> Sikh
<input type="checkbox"/> No Religion		<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say		<input type="checkbox"/> Other*	
* Please specify here					

Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) defines a disabled person as someone with a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'	
Taking this into account do you consider yourself to have a disability? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If you have answered yes, to help identify and better understand the needs of our disabled employees, please indicate the type(s) of impairment which applies to you.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Difficulties
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Long standing illness or heart condition
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Condition	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness
<input type="checkbox"/> Mobility Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/> Neurological Condition
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Coordination Difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Impairment
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced Physical Capacity	<input type="checkbox"/> Sensory Impairment
<input type="checkbox"/> Speech Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Impairment (not corrected by spectacles)
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/> None
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify here)	
Please note that if you have a disability that may have an effect upon your work, your health and safety at work or the health and safety of others, you must make your manager aware of this. This is so that any appropriate measures can be identified that would ensure the health and safety of you, your work colleagues or members of the public while you are at work.	