



Equality & Diversity Policy

Purpose/Scope

ROUC is working proactively to maximise equality of opportunity across the organisation, in access to its courses and in the provision of resources and services.

ROUC is committed to the opposition of discrimination in any form. It is also committed to the ideal of social justice and equality of opportunity. It acknowledges the presence of and expresses its opposition to all forms of discrimination, harassment and inequality of treatment. It aims to provide an environment where all are free from any form of discrimination and prejudice.

ROUC believes in equality of opportunity for all students and staff. We are opposed to any form of action, words or institutional practice which discriminates against people on the basis of race, colour, culture, religion, language, ability, disability, gender, age, marital status, sexuality or political affiliation. We are committed to the elimination of discrimination in all forms. Furthermore we recognise the effect of past discrimination and will seek through programmes of legally acceptable positive action to increase the level of participation of students and staff of those groups that are currently under-represented.

We aim to celebrate the diversity of backgrounds of all of our students and staff and we will challenge discriminatory language or behaviour whenever necessary.

This Code, in its entirety, applies to all members of ROUC, Community or potential members of that community.

Definitions

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

Within the United Kingdom there has been a significant body of legislation relating to discrimination. Also a number of Commissions in support of the legislation have issued codes on various aspects of discrimination from time to time. This policy reflects the consolidation of previous individual rights equality legislation into the Equality Act 2010 (The Act).

ROUC will implement its general equality duty set out in the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

ROUC will also meet its specific duties as defined by the law. It will continue to implement and assess the impact of its policies, procedures and practices on present and potential students, staff and visitors,

ROUC believes that high quality education is a right for all, and encourages all students and staff to reach their potential.

The Act streamlined the protection of individuals and will extend the coverage for what has been referred to as “protected characteristics”, these are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender & gender reassignment
- Pregnancy & maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or civil partnership

Through this Single Equality Scheme ROUC will assert its commitment to equality & inclusion to broaden its policies to serve those identified by the legislation; in our procedures & practices we will look to this Scheme to fulfil our obligations as a provider of higher education & services.

Responsibilities

The Principal has overall responsibility for equality issues and the Scheme.

The Director of Human Resources is responsible for the application of the Scheme to all matters relating to Staff, including recruitment and induction

The Principal is responsible for the application of the Scheme to all matters relating to Students.

All members of staff and students are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of ROUC’s statutory duties in relation to equal opportunities, that they uphold the principles

Reviewed September 2021

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underpinning this Scheme in all actions and behaviour. They are expected to challenge any instances of discriminatory behaviour.

The Academic Advisory Group is responsible for monitoring and evaluating ROUC's progress in achieving targets that it sets for itself with regard to creating equal opportunities for all those within its Community

Policy

ROUC is committed to equality of opportunity for all actual or potential staff and students and users of ROUC, and will take all reasonable steps to eliminate unfair and unjustified discrimination. Specifically it will:

- (a) Bring this code to the attention of all members of ROUC community
- (b) Require that staff and students reflect their commitment to this policy through the promotion of equal opportunities in their everyday activities.
- (c) Ensure that equal opportunity principles are applied in all appropriate policies and procedures, and other documentation.
- (d) Establish procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of and compliance with this policy.
- (e) Co-operate fully with Examining Boards and other educational bodies to ensure equal opportunities for all in the educational and training activities of ROUC.
- (f) Review procedures and practices as appropriate but at least annually.
- (g) Take appropriate action against anyone who discriminates against any other person.

GENERAL

1. Discrimination can be either direct or indirect. Direct discrimination occurs where people are treated less favourably than others on grounds which have no bearing on their ability to achieve that which is required.
2. Indirect discrimination occurs when unjustifiable conditions or requirements are applied which have a disproportionately adverse effect on a particular section of the community.
3. Favouritism is discrimination in that unjustifiably favouring one individual does by definition disadvantage others.
4. Equality of opportunity applies to all areas of Academy activity. In particular focus will be directed to the key areas of :

Reviewed September 2021

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- Marketing
- Selection - Staff and Students
- Enrolment
- Learning opportunity
- Teaching and Learning
- Induction
- Curriculum
- Health and Safety
- Advancement

Procedures

1. **Reporting of Incidences**

- 1.1. The ROUC Complaints procedure should be followed.

2. **Broad Principles**

- 2.1. ROUC will implement policies procedures and practices that will ensure the Equal Opportunities Policy for present and potential learners, staff and visitors.
- 2.2. ROUC believes that education is a right for all.
- 2.3. ROUC will actively work towards offering equality of opportunity to all learners, staff and visitors irrespective of ability, age, colour, educational needs, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, race, religion, sexual orientation, social background, political persuasion and trade union affiliation.
- 2.4. All participants in the educational process will be aware that they have a legal and moral responsibility to support the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 2.5. ROUC will take positive steps to eliminate all forms of discrimination, whether direct or indirect.
- 2.6. Discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated.
- 2.7. Wherever possible ROUC publicity and literature will be made available in appropriate languages and formats.

3. **Specific Principles and Broad Procedures**

3.1. **Access and Participation**

- 3.1.1. ROUC Equal Opportunities Policy statement will appear in all relevant Academy publications.

- 3.1.2. There will be no discrimination in relation to the recruitment and admission of learners. Positive action will be taken to increase participation in under-represented groups.
- 3.1.3. Advice to students on financial support matters will be provided in appropriate circumstances.
- 3.1.4. ROUC shall work toward ensuring that all learners have physical access to teaching, support and social areas.
- 3.1.5. ROUC shall take into account the needs of the local community and where appropriate involve representation.

3.2. Recruitment and Selection of Staff

- 3.2.1. Recruitment and selection of all staff will be carried out in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Policy practice
- 3.2.2. The long-term aim is that ROUC establishment should broadly reflect the make-up of the available-for-work population of Leicestershire.
- 3.2.3. The constitution of interview panels shall, wherever possible be representative of ROUC population.
- 3.2.4. The criteria for selection and also progression of existing employees will be determined solely on the basis of the requirements of the job.
- 3.2.5. Human Resources will be responsible for the maintenance of statistical information relating to the Equal Opportunities Policy in employment. Regular reports shall be made to the Directorate and an annual report to the Academic Advisory Group.

3.3. Marketing Publicity and External Liaison

- 3.3.1. ROUC will act to identify the needs of disadvantaged groups. This will include liaison with group representatives and market research.
- 3.3.2. ROUC's Equal Opportunities Policy Statement will appear in all Academy prospectuses. Publicity material will, where practical, reflect the diversity of, and be made available to, the community and will be free from bias. Special facilities such as learning workshops, will be emphasised in publicity materials.
- 3.3.3. ROUC's Equal Opportunities Policy will be displayed in public places throughout ROUC.
- 3.3.4. ROUC's publicity material will be made available in public places throughout the community.

3.4. Curriculum

- 3.4.1. It is the legal and ethical responsibility of all staff to conduct their teaching and learning activities in a non-discriminatory manner.
- 3.4.2. All learners will be provided with an effective Induction programme that familiarises them with ROUC's Equal Opportunities Policy and helps them to recognise the rights and responsibilities of themselves and others in relation to equality of opportunity.
- 3.4.3. ROUC will seek to ensure that resource materials and learning activities are free from discriminatory assumptions, images and language, and will act upon any that are brought to ROUC's attention. Exceptions may be made where such materials and activities are required for specific learning purposes.
- 3.4.4. Curriculum design will be sufficiently flexible, and the curriculum offer sufficiently broad, to take account of the needs of all learners, with the objective of providing easy access to the curriculum for non-traditional learners.
- 3.4.5. Inclusive learning and widening participation initiatives will be explored and supported to maximise learning opportunities for all.
- 3.4.6. ROUC will provide appropriate facilities to support learners in becoming independent learners.
- 3.4.7. ROUC will offer learning support in literacy and numeracy for all learners who are identified as requiring it, learner support for all those who need it and English language support for those whose first language is not English.
- 3.4.8. ROUC will set targets and monitor retention, achievement and progression rates for all learners leading to positive action for under-represented groups and to address any apparent inequality in achievement and success rates.

3.5. Support Services

- 3.5.1. Support will be provided by Personal Tutors for any learner who has been the recipient of harassment, bullying or any other form of discrimination.
- 3.5.2. Human Resources will provide unbiased advice and guidance to employees on all issues connected with their employment and their personal and professional development.
- 3.5.3. Subject and Personal tutors will provide appropriate impartial advice and guidance to all students and will ensure that they have access to appropriate financial advice.

3.6. ROUC Environment

- 3.6.1. ROUC seeks to create an environment in which all learners, staff and visitors feel comfortable, irrespective of race, gender, class ability etc.
- 3.6.2. ROUC will respond positively and courteously to all its learners, staff and visitors from the first point of contact.
- 3.6.3. ROUC facilities will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the needs of particular groups receive attention.
- 3.6.4. Provision will be made wherever possible for wheelchair access to all parts of ROUC. Accommodation Strategies will take into account the access needs of those with physical disabilities.

3.7. Staff Training and Development

- 3.7.1. ROUC will make all employees aware of their responsibility for the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 3.7.2. ROUC will provide training for Academy employees in respect of equality of opportunity and implementation of the ROUC Policy.
- 3.7.3. Staff training and development opportunities will be available for all staff, both teaching and support, full-time and part-time.
- 3.7.4. ROUC will take positive action to offer opportunities for training and promotion to groups of employees who are identified as disadvantaged.

Related Policies

The Protection of Learners Who Suffer From a Disability or Learning Difficulty – Appendix 8A Parts 1 and 2.