ITE Equality and Diversity Policy: 2022/23

The University of Sussex is committed to promoting equality and appreciating diversity in our society. Diversity has many different dimensions, including academic and physical ability, socio-economic and religious background, sexual orientation, ethnicity and culture. Sussex is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all, including pupils and trainees, in an environment free of harassment and bullying on any grounds. By challenging stereotypes and educating pupils about cultural heritage, we can assist in community cohesion.

At Sussex we are committed to producing teachers who understand and respect diversity and have a goal of promoting community cohesion alongside delivering their subject teaching. We seek to recruit trainees from a variety of backgrounds. Preference is given to those who are prepared to take responsibility for their own professional development, are punctual and reliable, work hard, and bring a sense of humour to see them through the difficult patches. We also expect trainee teachers to have a commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils. As such, trainees are expected to develop an awareness of the particular features associated with pupils’ social and ethnic origins, their gender and sexuality, and their levels of physical, emotional and intellectual ability.

All our ITE courses feature appropriate emphasis on issues around diversity and inclusion, and a consideration of community cohesion underpins all that we do. In addition, we run specific sessions in the Professional Studies programme, as well as in subject specific seminars. We have also recently established subject links with schools in London and elsewhere where our trainees can experience a more diverse environment and learn from experienced professionals.

The School of Education and Social Work (ESW) subscribes wholly to the University’s ‘Equality of Opportunities’ and ‘Race Equality’ policies. However, the particular circumstances of delivery of a professional course of training for QTS with partner schools, necessitates an additional focus for students studying on our ITE courses, whereby “All trainee teachers are entitled to receive high-quality, ambitious education and training” [Ofsted, 2020]

We provide equal opportunity training for all, and staff evaluate our practice each year to ensure we are operating within current guidelines. When reviewing our policies, we have specifically considered how the partnership is promoting equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination.

Protected characteristics include:
• age
• disability
• gender reassignment
• pregnancy and maternity
• race
• religion or belief
• sex
• sexual orientation
• marriage and civil partnerships

We require a commitment from partnership schools to incorporate university policies on equal opportunities into their own school policies and their assistance in the delivery of a course whose features include:
1. Recruitment Support:

Recruitment support should be available to individual applicants during selection procedures such as targeted advertising to minority ethnic and other disadvantaged groups, additional time for tasks and other reasonable adjustments for disabilities. Equivalency tests to enable trainees to meet university and DfE entry requirements.

2. In course support and guidance:

In course support and guidance is to be available in the following ways:

- Early analysis of needs during induction period
- Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities and additional learning needs (see appendix V)
- Sessions available on the English education system, voice and self-presentation, study and language skills, on-going support and guidance in these areas throughout the course
- Access to ICT as a communication tool.
- Courses for all trainees in raising racial awareness, equal opportunities, disabilities should be included in the course training to meet the standards relating to inclusion.
- Additional support is offered to EAL trainees.

3. School placements:

School Placements should take into account the specific individual needs of trainees so that schools provide the support necessary to enable trainees to reach the professional standard of which they are capable e.g.

- By supporting physical access.
- By raising racial and cultural awareness among Mentors.
- By supporting trainees with language and accent development.
- By making appropriate adjustments where needed to enable trainees to reach their potential.
- School placements should be provided in diverse schools e.g. single sex, ethnically diverse, faith schools.

4. Partner school support:

Training should be available for Mentors and Professional Tutors from our partner schools. This needs to focus on: Equal opportunities for all trainees, support for minority ethnic trainees in those areas which may prove difficult e.g. discipline in school, pronunciation, equal opportunities.

5. Celebration of Diversity:

University and partner schools should make and take opportunities to celebrate diversity both within the training population and the school intake.

6. Tutorial appointment:

All tutors specifically support BAME trainees in university and where possible on school placements to monitor the implementation of the above principles. BAME trainees are urged to contact their tutor if they have any concerns. The department also has a BAME ambassador who can offer guidance and support.

7. Complaints and reporting incidents:

In the case of complaints related to equal opportunities issues, see University Student Complaints Procedures on the main University website. If an incident arising directly or indirectly from an equal opportunities issue (gender, race, sexuality, disability or religion) takes place in school, please report it at once to one of the following: Mentor, Professional Tutor, Curriculum Tutor, copied to the Course Leader, and follow university procedures if you to lodge a complaint.
This may also lead into Termination of Placements and Suitability for Professional Practice Procedures.

8. Equal Opportunities Monitoring Beyond the University’s Equal Opportunities monitoring procedures:

The SCTER Steering Committee reviews Equal Opportunities issues as a standing item. Once a year the ITE Director reviews the Equal Opportunities policy and reports to the Sussex Consortium Steering Committee. Further references: For information and guidance about recent legislation on discrimination on the grounds of age, sexuality or religion, see: Equality Act 2010: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidanceSexual orientation in the workplace, EEL02 (ACAS 2009)

Religion or belief and the workplace, EEL01 (ACAS 2009) Age and the workplace, EEL03 (ACAS 2011) ACA and Employment Equality Legislation: https://www.acas.org.uk


If you experience any harassment on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, nationality, age or disability, please contact the Student Advisors within your school, or the Welfare Officer at the University’s Student Union [welfare@ussu.sussex.ac.uk / 01273 873354] - internal extension 3354.

For more advice and information, see the University’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion web pages: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/equalities/

For information on disability support, see the Student Support Unit’s web pages: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentsupport/disability or contact them directly [studentsupport@sussex.ac.uk / 01273 877466] - internal extension 7466.

For any concerns regarding LGBTQ+ matters, see advice and guidance from the Student Life Centre in the first instance: https://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre/issues/lgbtq.