



## **Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy and Implementation Plan** **ESF Widening Participation through Skills - 2 Project**

This policy sets out the project's commitment, including the commitment of the University of Plymouth's Board of Governors, Vice-Chancellor and senior management and all of the project delivery partners, to promote equal opportunities and work to prevent any unlawful or unfair discrimination and harassment in your place of work or study. It applies to all staff and participants.

We are committed to the principles of equal opportunities and respect for individuals in creating and maintaining an inclusive environment. We value and celebrate diversity, seeing this as critical to achieving our strategic aims and long-term success. We work to recruit and develop employees and participants from a wide range of backgrounds and promote an inclusive culture where:

- We provide a supportive and inclusive learning, working and social environment where everyone feels that they are valued and can work to achieve their potential;
- We offer opportunities that are open to everyone, and decisions are based on merit and are free from bias;
- We work to make sure that all of our participants, employees and visitors, as well as anyone who applies or wants to apply to work or study with us, are treated fairly and with dignity and respect, and do not face discrimination.

We are committed to providing equality for everyone, regardless of:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality);
- Sex;
- Gender reassignment;
- Religion or belief;
- Sexual orientation;
- Marriage and civil partnership; and
- Pregnancy and maternity (whether or not you are pregnant or have given birth recently).

These are defined in the Equality Act 2010 as 'protected characteristics'.

This policy is supported by a number of linked policies, schemes and action plans already in place within the University of Plymouth and its ESF Widening Participation through Skills delivery partner institutions.

In implementing the above policy the ESF Widening Participation project will:

In relation to Compliance we will:

- Commit to compliance with all Equality and Diversity legislation and requirements and secure compliance from partners, e.g. through our agreed protocol with partners, through the procurement process, through contract management and monitoring which will require that all those contracted with the University of Plymouth to deliver provision for the ESF Widening Participation through Skills project have a Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities policy which complies with the Equality Act 2010.
- Lead by example and challenge discrimination, harassment and victimisation; promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations in our day to day work.
- Attend relevant training programmes and those organised by the Managing Authority to ensure that the most appropriate and effective practices are undertaken in the management and delivery of the ESF Widening Participation through Skills project.
- Ensure that all staff involved in implementation of the project have up-to-date training and opportunities for professional development.

In relation to Project Design, Planning and recruitment of participants, we will:

- Design provision which promotes gender equality (along with other quality needs)
- Ensure that training programmes are developed and implemented to reflect the aspirations of participants.

In relation to the delivery of training, we will:

- Provide all ESF Widening Participants through Skills project participants with access to a copy of the Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy and Implementation Plan ensuring that we are communicating our commitments with participants.
- Deliver provision in accessible, flexible, sensitive ways which are appropriate to participants needs and, wherever possible, removing barriers which prevent participation, e.g. identified training is accessible to disabled participants; arranging training to fit in with child-care for part time workers.
- Ensure that learning and support for the project participants takes place in environments where they are free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation and where positive attitudes and relationship are fostered.
- Where appropriate encourage and support women to aspire to careers which are highly paid but remain male-dominated, e.g. science, engineering, technology, in addition to aspiring to well-paid roles in which females traditionally dominate e.g. Health & Social Care.
- Provide opportunities and encourage men and women to gain qualifications.

In relation to our role as an employer, we will:

- Demonstrate our commitment to equality in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, career development, pay, training, promotion and welfare.
- Provide opportunities for flexible part-time working to better meet the needs of women with family responsibilities.
- Through our staff appraisal processes review performance in relation to equality objectives and address any areas for development through staff training.

In relation to communications, we will:

- Ensure that this Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy and Implementation Plan for the ESF Widening Participation through Skills project is circulated and promoted to all Partners, and all involved in implementation of the project.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Project Management Group (PMG) for the ESF Widening Participation through Skills - 2 project will monitor the effectiveness of the actions to implement this Gender Equality and Equal opportunities policy.
- A report of progress in implementing the Policy will be a standing agenda item at the regular meetings of the PMG. Reports of progress will encompass all project partners.
- Surveys of the views of participants and those involved in delivering provision will inform evaluation.
- We will collect data on a quarterly basis in line with claim periods in relation to the number of participants engaged in the project and securing qualifications. We will monitor progress and achievement to identify the performance of different groups e.g. by age, disability, ethnicity, and gender and by vulnerable groups, e.g. single adult households with dependent children. This analysis will be considered at the regular PMG meetings to inform future action to address any emerging issues.
- We will continue to improve our effectiveness in implementing the Policy by setting equality outcomes and reviewing our progress towards these goals.

Please note that this is a working document and will be subject to amendments and change within the life of the project.



Signed:

Adrian Dawson  
Director of Research and Innovation

June 2019