

## Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning Equal Opportunities Policy (incorporating diversity)

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Date(s) of review(s)	Reviewed by	Date of next review
June 2007	SCIL SMT	June 2008
June 2008	SCIL SMT	June 2009
June 2009	SCIL SMT	June 2010
June 2010	SCIL SMT	June 2011
June 2011	SCIL SMT	June 2012
June 2012	SCIL SMT	July 2013
July 2013	SCIL SMT	July 2014
July 2014	SCIL SMT	August 2015
August 2015	SCIL SMT	August 2016
August 2016	SCIL SMT	August 2017
August 2017	SCIL SMT	August 2018
August 2018	SCIL SMT	March 2019
March 2019	SCIL SMT	March 2020
March 2020	SCIL SMT	March 21
April 2021	SCIL SMT	April 2022

**Process for monitoring and evaluation.** Monitoring by Management Team with outcomes recorded in notes of meetings and periodic evaluation and review by Management Board.

This Policy has been developed by Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning (SCIL), the training arm for Support Services for Education (SSE) part of Somerset County Council. All training programmes have a commitment to providing a supportive learning environment which enables all trainees who have chosen to study with SCIL to achieve their full potential.

Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning (SCIL) is committed to equality of opportunity for all our Student, Apprentices, Learners and Trainees (SALTs). SCIL recognises that everybody is different, and diversity is about recognising, respecting and valuing the differences we each bring regardless of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Carers are protected through association with disability but is not one of the nine protected characteristics.

SCIL will follow The Equality Act (2010) which sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

Somerset, like the rest of Britain, is a diverse society, it embraces men, women and children of all ages and sexuality, with or without disability, of different faiths, and from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Somerset is predominantly rural; this can lead to particular communities and individuals becoming isolated and disadvantaged as a result of where they live. That isolation can doubly disadvantage groups who already face social and institutional discrimination.

SCIL, in association with Somerset County Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, diversity and access (physical access and communication of information) for all people particularly those who are:

- employees of the County Council;
- seeking and using the County Councils services.
- external or internal candidates applying for a job, whether full or part-time or job share, permanent or temporary with the County Council or its contractors;
- registered as a SALT with SCIL or with one of our partner organisations.

- in receipt of goods or services from County Council contractors, or organisations, voluntary or otherwise, with whom the County Council is working in partnership.

These objectives are complementary in that SCIL and Somerset County Council believes that the quality and sensitivity of service is enhanced when the makeup of the workforce reflects the community it serves.

SCIL and Somerset County Council will not knowingly discriminate (directly or indirectly) against anyone because of their race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion, sex or sexuality, disability, age, marital status, domestic responsibilities, political or trade union activity. (These are only examples; other forms of discrimination will be avoided also). It will also try to eliminate the risk of unintentional discrimination in the way it provides information and services.

The policy objectives and opportunities will be pursued throughout the County Councils services, employment practices and training and development including, as appropriate:

1. Raise awareness so that all staff become committed to taking positive action to eliminate discrimination in employment practices and the delivery of services;
2. Put County Council policies, codes of practice and guidance relating to training and development into practice in every instance: e.g. Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination Policy;
3. Ensure that services, and the publicity about them, are equally accessible by giving adequate consideration to issues of, mental, physical and sensory impairment, and the literacy, language and confidence of service users;
4. Ensure that the delivery of training is relevant to the needs of different user groups by taking account of the diversity of backgrounds, needs and cultures.
5. Where a need becomes apparent, interpretation and translation services will be made available to enable SALTS to communicate with SCIL in the language and format with which they feel most comfortable.
6. Work in partnership with communities and groups, to address training delivery needs, promote good relations, and positive participation in anti-discrimination measures;
7. Ensure other agencies with whom the Council collaborates in the joint provision of services are aware of the Councils commitment and requirement to adhere to this policy.
8. Ensure that the method for making a complaint is clearly communicated and that complaints about Equal Opportunities are appropriately handled and monitored;

9. All staff are expected to be familiar with this policy, undertake appropriate e-learning as part of their induction and to conduct themselves in accordance with expected behaviours.
10. Any deliberate act of discrimination against other employees, volunteers, staff, SALTs, or members of the public by employees in the course of their duty will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

**Equal Opportunities relating to learning opportunities offered by SCIL and their partners.**

- We strive to avoid discrimination against anyone on the grounds of their gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, disability, 'race' (including ethnicity, colour or nationality), religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership either directly or indirectly.
- We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education and training provided.
- We ensure that this policy is accessible to all our SALTs through our E-portfolio, discussed during induction.
- We ensure that all SALTs have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities. We seek to recognise barriers that limit peoples success and put provision in place to overcome them. (See Access to Assessment Policy)
- We constantly attempt to avoid any form of indirect discrimination which may form barriers to learning.
- We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
- We challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs.
- We celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups, recognising the strengths that diversity brings to our society.
- We aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all through positive educational experiences and recognition of each individual' s point of view.
- We promote the Equal Opportunities Policies of our Partners, Somerset County Council, its schools, the University of Worcester and Awarding Organisations.
- We regularly review our practice and the outcomes of our work, in order to identify areas where equalities issues need to be addressed and take action as a result.
- In the event of any complaint being made against us on equal opportunities grounds, we promise to investigate this fairly and openly in line with Somerset County Councils Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Procedures. Details

of how to initiate a complaint are given in the document titled 'Complaints Procedure' .

- Following any investigation, we will review and amend our practice if necessary.

### **Race Equality Statement**

- It is the right of all our SALTs to receive the best education and training with access to all educational activities organised by SCIL. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should any racist incident occur, we will act immediately to prevent any recurrence.
- Should a SALT be a victim of racism, we will do all we can to support that person in overcoming any difficulties they may have.
- We endeavour to make our facilities welcoming to all and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.
- We promote an understanding of different cultures through the work undertaken, and we reflect this in the resources available to SALTs and the environment in which they train.
- Our course promotes respect for minority groups and reflects positive attitudes towards them.
- Whenever a racial incident is *thought by someone* to have occurred it should be reported to the SCIL Project Manager. For the purposes of reporting and recording "a racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person" (Stephen Lawrence enquiry report). If it occurs in a school the headteacher should be alerted and school procedures followed. Schools are asked to report any incidents to the Local Authority. Copies of any reporting documents should be sent to the SCIL Project Manager.

**This statement supports the Equal Opportunities Policy. It is based on the "Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality" (May 2002)**

We operate within the diversity and equalities policies and guidance for Somerset County Council.