

RGS Muscat
2023/24 Equal Opportunities Policy



Written by	
Approved by	
Review Date	

Equal Opportunities Policy

1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

RGS Muscat is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. You and any job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. These are known hereby as the Protected Characteristics.

2. ABOUT THIS POLICY

- 2.1 This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with us, including recruitment, pay and conditions, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.
- 2.2 This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers and agency workers.
- 2.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

3. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS POLICY?

- 3.1 Our Governing Body has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law. Day-to-day operational responsibility for this policy, including regular review of this policy, has been delegated to the Bursar.
- 3.2 All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice. The Bursar has overall responsibility for equal opportunities training.
- 3.3 If you are involved in management or recruitment, or if you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Human Resources Department.
- 3.4 Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the Human Resources Department.

4. DISCRIMINATION

- 4.1 You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former members of staff (including employees, agency staff, contractors, casual staff, volunteers,) students, parents or guardians, governors, job applicants, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with students, parents or guardians, members of staff, governors, customers, suppliers or other work-related contacts or when wearing a work uniform), and on work-related trips or events including social events.
- 4.2 The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:
- (a) **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. In recognition of the religious character of Stonyhurst International School, there may be occasions where we may require a job to be done by someone with a particular characteristic, however we will only take this step where the requirement is crucial to the role, and is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For example, we reserve the right to employ only practising Roman Catholics to certain key positions including the Head of Religious Studies and school Chaplain.
 - (b) **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect parents because they generally have greater childcare commitments than non-parents. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
 - (c) **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.
 - (d) **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
 - (e) **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

5. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

- 5.1 Recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person and with the involvement of the Human Resources Department, where possible. Our recruitment procedures should be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.
- 5.2 Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. They should include a short policy statement on equal opportunities and a copy of this policy will be made available on request.
- 5.3 Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

TRAINING AND PROMOTION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

- 6.1 Training needs will be identified through regular appraisals. You will be given appropriate access to training to enable you to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.
- 6.2 Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all of you who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

7. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

- 7.1 We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.
- 7.2 We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

8. DISABILITIES

- 8.1 If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.
- 8.2 If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact the Human Resources Department to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The Human Resources Department may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- 8.3 We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.

9. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

- 9.1 We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.
- 9.2 If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure or through our Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy as appropriate. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.
- 9.3 There must be no victimisation or retaliation against staff who complain about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.