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## **GBS Equality and Diversity Policy for Staff and Students**

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### Related policies

- GBS Student Charter
- GBS Student Code of Conduct
- GBS Academic Good Practice and Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- GBS Academic Appeals Policy
- GBS Student Protection Plan
- GBS Assessment and Feedback Policy
- GBS Student Disciplinary Policy
- GBS Student Complaints Policy and Procedure
- GBS Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy
- GBS Staff Complaints Policy and Procedure
- GBS Grievance Policy

### External Reference

1. Information Commissioner's Office, Accessed online at: <https://ico.org.uk/>
2. UK Public General Acts, *Data Protection Act 2018*, Accessed online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted>
3. UK Public General Acts, *Mental Health Act 2007*, Accessed online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/12/contents>
4. UK Public General Acts, *Equality Act 2010*, Accessed online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
5. UK Public General Acts, *Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, Accessed online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/50/contents>

## Contents

1. Policy Statement .....	4
2. Purpose and Objectives .....	4
3. Scope of policy.....	5
4. Responsibilities .....	5
5. Application of the Equality and Diversity Policy: Staff .....	7
6. Application of the Equality and Diversity Policy: Students .....	8
7. Training .....	9
8. Communication .....	9
9. Breach .....	9
10. Monitoring and Review.....	9
11. Data Protection and Confidentiality .....	9
12. Alternative Format.....	10
Annex 1- Global Banking School Values.....	11
Annex 2- Glossary of Key words/terms .....	12
Annex 2- Legislative Framework.....	15
Annex 3- Examples of Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation.....	16

## Global Banking School Equality and Diversity Policy for Staff and Students

### 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. Global Banking School (GBS) seeks to provide students an experience that changes the lives of all our students, fosters a culture of positive wellbeing and values their voices. GBS is committed to supporting, developing, and promoting equality and diversity in all its practices and activities and aims to establish an inclusive culture free from discrimination and based upon the values of dignity, courtesy, and respect. GBS will support and develop its staff by providing all with access to facilities, personal and career development opportunities, and employment based on equality.
- 1.2. GBS will aim to create a positive and excellent teaching and learning environment for its students. GBS will provide fair, equitable and mutually supportive learning and working environment for both our students and our staff. By eliminating discrimination and advancing equality on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.
- 1.3. GBS values diversity through the wide range of backgrounds, experiences, views, beliefs, and cultures represented within its staff and student groups. We aim to embrace diversity in all of its activities and proudly acknowledge that variety and difference are intrinsic to the wellbeing and future development of GBS.

### 2. Purpose and Objectives

- 2.1 This policy defines the principles and framework GBS will use to drive innovation, improvements, and systemic changes, providing physical and virtual learning, work and social environments that enable full and equitable participation for our staff and students. GBS seeks to be a learning environment where all staff and students feel safe and welcome regardless of their identity or background, and to be a place where diverse perspectives are respected.
- 2.2 Our vision is 'changing lives through education that makes a fundamental difference to living standards and access to learning'. *(Please see Annex 1-Global Banking School Values)*. Our objective is to acknowledge the basic rights for all our existing and prospective staff and students:

- Focusing on learners and learning
- Striving for excellence in learner achievement
- Supporting widening participation for students living in traditionally low areas of higher education participation
- Ensuring high aspirations and learner achievement
- Having committed and qualified staff
- Creating a dynamic and welcoming environment
- Working in effective teams and partnerships
- For all to be treated fairly with respect and dignity
- To be encouraged to reach one's full potential
- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity across all the activities of GBS
- Support staff and students, including provision of relevant support relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, and belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.

### **3. Scope of policy**

3.1 This policy covers all GBS students and all staff, irrespective of their status, position, level, or grade (such as current students, prospective students, existing students, teachers, support staff, managers, trainees, casual staff, visitors, and agency staff).

### **4. Responsibilities**

4.1 It is the responsibility of all members of GBS community to behave with dignity, courtesy, and respect, and to act in a manner that does not unlawfully discriminate, at all times. The responsibilities of staff and students at GBS are as follows:

- GBS Senior Management Team (SMT): Responsible for ensuring that their staff are made aware of this policy and any case of alleged discrimination, harassment and inappropriate behaviour are dealt with appropriately. SMT must maintain oversight of instances of discrimination in practice and recognise that they must actively promote a culture of zero tolerance and ensure that there are arrangements in place to support all students or staff who experience it. They must also:

- Ensure that members staff receive appropriate Equality and Diversity training.
  - To ensure that selection and appointment procedures, performance management processes, staff development opportunities, and disciplinary and grievance processes are fairly and consistently applied to all staff.
  - To treat all staff applications for flexible working practices on a fair and equitable basis, and to provide reasonable and objective reasons when such requests are refused.
  - To ensure that student selection and admissions procedures, assessment processes, career development opportunities and disciplinary and complaints procedures are fairly and consistently applied to all students.
  - To provide leadership in the implementation, operation and understanding of this Equality and Diversity policy.
  - To be accountable for any issues concerned with failure to adhere to this Equality and Diversity Policy.
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- GBS Academic Standards and Quality Office (ASQO)<sup>1</sup>: Responsible for implementation, monitoring and review of this policy and ensuring that training, guidance, and advice is made available to staff and can be contacted on [asqo@globalbanking.ac.uk](mailto:asqo@globalbanking.ac.uk).
  - GBS Line Managers: Responsible for positively encouraging respect for dignity, and for addressing any issues concerning discrimination. Line Managers may be asked to deal with informal complaints made by staff or students and may be required to investigate informal complaints against a student or group of students.
  - GBS Human Resources and Managing Director are jointly responsible for dealing with formal allegations of discrimination against a member of staff.
  - All GBS Members (staff, students and visitors): Responsible for fostering a culture of respect for dignity and for avoiding behaviour that is offensive to other people. They must also:

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly known as GBS Quality Assurance Team

- To actively encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidences of behaviour that fail to comply with this policy.
  - To be aware of and support this Equality and Diversity Policy.
  - Staff to undertake appropriate Equality and Diversity training.
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- GBS Student Representative Committee plays an important role to consider matters with regards to the general student experience. Student Representatives are responsible for delivering messages to the wider student body in relation to our zero-tolerance policy and the possible consequences and actions that we will take regarding inequality and discrimination.
  
  - GBS Executive Board will have an oversight of the Equality and Diversity procedures and will be regularly provided with anonymised data concerning cases for review.
  
  - GBS Academic Board is responsible to advise the Executive Board on regulations and processes concerning the conduct of students, maintaining oversight, and monitoring the implementation of policies including this policy and its accompanying procedures.

## **5. Application of the Equality and Diversity Policy: Staff**

### **5.1 Recruitment and Selection**

- 5.1.1 Recruitment advertising will encourage applications from all sectors of the community reflecting GBS' commitment to equality and diversity. This will appear in publications appropriate to the audience capable of producing the best candidates (subject to budget considerations). Job descriptions, person specifications and recruitment advertisements will be written based on the essential and justifiable requirements of the position. Shortlisting, appointment, and rejection decisions will be transparent and justifiable.

### **5.2 Grading and Promotion**

- 5.2.1 All grading and promotions criteria and procedures will be free from prejudice and must be applied equitably and consistently.

### **5.3 Staff Development**

5.4 All staff will have equal access to induction, personal and career development opportunities, and facilities.

### **5.5 Performance Management**

5.5.1 Probation and appraisal procedures will be clear and transparent and will be applied fairly across all staff.

### **5.6 Discipline and Grievance**

5.6.1 Disciplinary and grievance procedures will be applied fairly and transparently for all staff. Allegations of discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with under the appropriate disciplinary procedures for staff.

## **6. Application of the Equality and Diversity Policy: Students**

### **6.1 Responsibility Recruitment, Selection and Admission**

6.1.1 All information contained in prospectuses, websites and other material used in the recruitment of students will promote equality of opportunity and refer to this policy. All staff involved in the recruitment, selection and admission of students will have an awareness of equality and diversity.

### **6.2 Assessment**

6.2.1 There will be clear, consistent, and transparent criteria for student assessments and all assessments will take place on an equal opportunities' basis.

### **6.3 Career Planning and Participation**

6.3.1 All students will have access to career planning support and will be encouraged to participate fully in the academic, cultural, and social life of GBS.

### **6.4 Discipline and Student Complaints**

6.4.1 Discipline and student complaints policies and procedures will be applied fairly and transparently for all students. Allegations of harassment or

discrimination will be dealt with under GBS Student Charter and GBS Student Code of Conduct.

## **7. Training**

7.1 Equality and diversity awareness raising, and training will be mandatory for all staff and information will be provided during staff induction.

7.2 Students will be briefed on GBS Equality and Diversity Policy during induction at the start of their studies and at least once a year thereafter. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to students through our virtual learning environment (VLE).

## **8. Communication**

8.1 The Equality and Diversity Policy will be made available to staff, students, prospective students, and the public more generally via GBS website (<http://globalbanking.ac.uk>).

## **9. Breach**

9.1 Contravention or breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with under the staff or student disciplinary policies, as appropriate.

## **10. Monitoring and Review**

10.1 This policy may be amended by GBS at any time. GBS will ensure that all staff receive appropriate training to enable them to comply with this policy. GBS will regularly test our systems and processes to monitor compliance. Any issues related to the monitoring and review of this policy, please contact [asqo@globalbanking.ac.uk](mailto:asqo@globalbanking.ac.uk).

## **11. Data Protection and Confidentiality**

11.1 GBS is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office as a Data Controller. Details of the School's registration are published on the [Information Commissioners website](#). GBS as a Data Controller shall implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure that processing of personal information is performed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

11.2 All documentation relating to complaints will be kept confidential and shall be disclosed only to those persons who have a right to the information by virtue of their role. For Data Protection purposes and compliance matters, please contact [dpa@globalbanking.ac.uk](mailto:dpa@globalbanking.ac.uk).

## **12. Alternative Format**

12.1 This policy can be provided in alternative formats (including large print, audio and electronic) upon request. For further information, or to make a request, please contact:

- **Name:** Student Welfare Management Team
- **Position:** Student Welfare Officer/Manager
- **Email:** [welfare@globalbanking.ac.uk](mailto:welfare@globalbanking.ac.uk)

## Annex 1- Global Banking School Values

- ❖ Our vision is *'to change lives through education that makes a fundamental difference to living standards and access to learning'*.



- ❖ We believe that education is transformational. It enables personal growth which can lead to better employment prospects.
- ❖ Our values are not just a set of words, they define who we are and what we strive to be as an organisation.
- ❖ We want to put our values at the heart of everything that we do, and we need our staff and students help to make this a success.

## Annex 2- Glossary of Key words/terms

**Age** A protected characteristic. A person belonging to a particular age (for example, 65-year-old) or a range of ages (for example 50 to 60 years of age).

**Antisemitism** is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

**Direct Discrimination** Is where a person or group of people is treated less favourably than another individual or group of people because of a protected characteristic.

**Direct Discrimination by Association** Is where a person or group of people is treated less favourably because they associate with another person or group of people who has protected characteristics.

**Direct Discrimination by Perception** Is where a person or group of people is treated less favourably than another person or group of people because other people or groups of people think they have a protected characteristic.

**Disability** A protected characteristic. A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long term and adverse effect of the person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities. Long term means that the disability has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months. Substantial means more than minor or trivial.

**Diversity** is concerned with acknowledging, respecting, and valuing differences between individuals and groups of people.

**Equality** is about ensuring that people are treated fairly and given equal opportunities. Equality is not about treating everyone in the same way. Equality is about ensuring that different individuals and groups have their needs met in appropriate ways. Equality offers a framework that enables opportunity, access, participation, and contribution that is fair and inclusive.

**Gender Reassignment** A protected characteristic. This is the process of transitioning from one gender to another and is a personal process, rather than a medical process (it does not require

someone to undergo medical treatment to be protected). Transsexual refers to a person who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. It is important not to confuse gender reassignment with sexual orientation. A transsexual person can be a gay man, lesbian, heterosexual, or bisexual.

**Equality Impact Assessment** Is a process whereby a policy, procedure or practice is reviewed, and if necessary amended, to ensure that it does not discriminate against any person or group of people with a protected characteristic.

**Harassment** Is where a person or group of people behave in such a way that their conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an environment that is hostile, degrading, humiliating, or intimidating.

**Indirect Discrimination** A rule or policy that applies to everyone and consequently disadvantages people or groups of people with protected characteristics.

**Marriage and Civil Partnership** A protected characteristic. Marriage is a legal union between a man and a woman, a man and a man, and a woman and a woman. Same sex couple can also have their relationship legally recognized as a civil partnership. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

**Positive Action** means offering targeted assistance to people so that they can take full and equal advantage of opportunities. Positive action means taking steps to ensure that all groups of people have equal opportunity of access to, for example GBS' services and facilities.

**Pregnancy and Maternity** A protected characteristic. Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for twenty-six weeks after giving birth and this includes treating a woman unfavorably because she is breastfeeding.

**Protected Characteristics** Protected characteristics are definitions for groups of people given protection under the Equality Act 2010. Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, and belief, and sex and sexual orientation.

**Race** A protected characteristic. Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins.

**Reasonable Adjustment** The duty to make reasonable adjustment is made up of three requirements. For providers of education these requirements are to take reasonable steps to:

(i) Avoid the substantial disadvantage where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled students at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who are not disabled.

(ii) Remove or alter a physical feature or provide a reasonable means of avoiding such a feature where it puts disabled students at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who are not disabled.

(iii) Provide an auxiliary aid where disabled students would, but for the provision of such an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who are not disabled.

**Religion or belief** A protected characteristic. Religion means any religion or a lack of religion. A religion need not be mainstream or well-known to gain protection as a religion. A religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief system means any religious or philosophical belief and includes lack of belief. A belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

**Sex** A protected characteristic. A male or a female. **Sexual Orientation** A protected characteristic. Sexual orientation is a person's sexual attraction to persons of the same sex (a gay man or a lesbian), persons of the opposite sex (heterosexual) or either sex (bisexual).

**Victimisation** Is where a person or group of people are treated less favourably because they have, for example, raised a complaint or grievance under the Equality Act 2010.

## **Annex 2- Legislative Framework**

The Equality Act 2010 (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>) brought together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined they make up a new Act that provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. The Act protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The nine main pieces of legislation that were merged into the Equality Act 2010 were:

The Equal Pay Act 1970

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Race Relations Act 1976

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

The Equality Act 2006, Part 2

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

Protected Characteristics are definitions for groups of people given protection under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Annex 3- Examples of Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation**

#### ***(a) Example of direct discrimination***

A providing higher education programmes rejects a prospective male student's application to a childcare programme of study because the Admissions Tutor does not think it appropriate for a male to be working with young children.

This would constitute unlawful discrimination on the grounds of the protected characteristic of sex.

#### ***(b) Example of direct discrimination by association***

Janet applies to a language class and discloses to the tutor that her boyfriend is Jewish, although she is not. The tutor then tells Janet that he has made a mistake and that the class is full. Later, Janet finds out that others have been allowed to join the language class after she was refused entry.

The tutor's conduct is likely to amount to direct discrimination by association because of religion or belief because of Jane's association with her Jewish boyfriend.

#### ***(c) Example of direct discrimination by perception***

John, a landlord, advertises a flat to rent in a local paper and Peter meets John to view the flat and find out further details. Jason assumes that Peter is gay because of his mannerisms, voice and style of dress. As John does not want to rent his property to a gay man, he informs Peter that the flat is no longer available.

This is indirect discrimination because of sexual orientation due to Jason's perception that Peter is a gay man.

#### ***(d) Example of indirect discrimination***

In a neighbourhood that includes a large Muslim community, a local community group provides lunch for elderly people, but they say that because the supplier cannot provide Halal meals they are unable to provide meals for Muslim customers. The policy not to supply Halal meals would disadvantage Muslim people in particular.

The community's group policy not to supply Halal meals is unlikely to be justifiable since they could simply seek and alternative supplier that could supply Halal meals.

***(e) Example of Harassment***

A member of staff makes a derogatory remark about a student going through gender reassignment. Another member of staff finds the first member of staff's remark offensive.

The member of staff's derogatory remark would constitute harassment.

***(f) Example of victimisation***

An individual ran a training seminar for unemployed people to help them prepare their CVs. Mohammed, a Muslim delegate attending the seminar, wrote to complain that he was not excused from part of the seminar to attend afternoon prayers. The next time Mohammed applied to attend a follow up seminar he was told that there were no places left, but later found out that his friend had been given a place, even though he had applied after Mohammed.

Mohammed had been victimized because he had made a complaint related to his religion.

***(g) Example of disability discrimination***

A student diagnosed with autism often speaks out of turn during tutorials, which can create a disruptive atmosphere for the tutor and other students. Because of his behavior the student with autism is asked not to attend tutorials in future.

This is likely to constitute discrimination arising from disability.