

## **SECTION 10 – EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

**(Extract from Staff Handbook)**

### **10.1 Policy Statement**

10.1.1 The London Mathematical Society (LMS) welcomes diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and the avoidance of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The LMS recognises the benefit of embracing diversity so that its workforce is representative of society.

10.1.2 The LMS will take reasonable and practicable steps to ensure that employees and job applicants 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 (“**Protected Characteristics**”). The LMS aims to create an inclusive working environment where people from diverse backgrounds and experience are treated with respect and dignity and can thrive.

10.1.3 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.

10.1.4 This policy does not form part of any employee’s contract of employment and we may amend it at any time, at our discretion.

### **10.2 Discrimination**

10.2.1 Employees must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, members, clients, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with members, customers, suppliers or other work-related contacts), and on work-related trips or events including social events.

10.2.2 The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

#### **10.2.2.i Direct Discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another due to a Protected Characteristic. Examples of direct discrimination include rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views, or not promoting an employee because they might be gay.

##### **i) Associative Discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against someone because of their association with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. An example would be where an employee is treated less favourably than other employees because they have taken time off work to look after a disabled child.

##### **ii) Perceptive Discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against a person because others think that they possess a particular protected characteristic, even if they do not in fact possess that characteristic. An example would be where an employee is treated less favourably than other employees because he is perceived to be homosexual when he is not, in fact, homosexual.

#### 10.2.2.ii **Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect discrimination occurs where a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not objectively justified. Examples of indirect discrimination may include requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time which would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such requirements would be indirectly discriminatory unless they could be justified.

#### 10.2.2.iii **Disability Discrimination**

This includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and a failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

#### 10.2.2.iv **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 in further detail under the Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy.

#### 10.2.2.v **Victimisation**

Victimisation is retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

### **10.3 Recruitment, Promotion and Selection**

10.3.1 Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination.

10.3.2 Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. The content and placement of advertisements should be reviewed regularly to ensure that applications are encouraged from all sections of the community. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. All recruitment advertisements should include a statement that LMS is an equal opportunities employer.

10.3.3 Employees responsible for shortlisting, interviewing and selecting candidates should be clearly informed of the selection criteria and the need for their consistent application. Shortlisting should usually be done by more than one person if possible.

10.3.4 Once applications are received, applicants should compete on equal terms with appointments being made on the basis of objective criteria that relate to an individual's ability to do the job.

10.3.5 Where job applicants are disabled, we will consider whether reasonable adjustments may be needed to enable them to take part in the recruitment and selection process.

10.3.6 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.

10.3.7 Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, except in the very limited circumstances allowed by law: for example, to check that the applicant could perform an intrinsic part of the job (taking into account any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview because of a disability. Where necessary and appropriate, job offers may be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check.

10.3.8 Job descriptions and person specifications should reflect the needs of the post to which they relate and should not ask for qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience that are not necessary for the performance of the job role.

## **10.4 Disabilities**

If you are disabled, or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

## **10.5 Part-time and Fixed-term Work**

Part-time and fixed-term employees should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

## **10.6 Data Collection and Reporting**

10.6.1 The LMS will collate workforce demographics through the use of an equal opportunities monitoring questionnaire. All job applicants will be asked to complete the questionnaire asking for information about ethnic origin, sex, age and disability. The information acquired will be stored in accordance with data protection legislation and will not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.

10.6.2 The LMS will use the information gathered from the monitoring process for statistical analysis to identify any issues regarding equality of opportunity within the organisation and address these as necessary. The LMS may decide to provide further training or support for employees or revise a policy or practice that has been found to disadvantage employees or job applicants with a particular Protected Characteristic.

10.6.3 Employees will be asked to check the information held about them from time to time to ensure that it is up to date and correct.

## **10.7 Training**

All new employees will receive equality and diversity training and will be given a copy of this policy. Thereafter, the LMS will run further equality and diversity training as appropriate but as a minimum, once every three years to ensure employees understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to dignity at work.

## **10.8 Implementation of this Policy**

10.8.1 Management have responsibility for implementing this policy, and employees have responsibility for understanding their specific responsibilities under this policy and knowing what to do to implement them. In particular:

10.8.2 **Management** has responsibility for ensuring that:

- they operate in accordance with this policy,

- they ensure that their employees are made aware of this policy and how it affects them,
- they take action to deal with any discriminatory behaviour which occurs within the workplace and at workplace related events, and
- they follow the procedures and policies in place to deal with any complaints raised under this policy.

10.8.3 **All employees** have responsibility for ensuring that:

- they comply with this policy both within the workplace and at any work-related events,
- if they become aware of discriminatory behaviour they report it to their line manager or the PA to the Executive Secretary, and they do not victimise or retaliate against an employee who has made an allegation or complaint of discrimination.

## **10.9 Breaches of this Policy**

10.9.1 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. Employees should also be mindful of the fact that they can be held personally liable for acts of unlawful discrimination.

If an employee believes they have been discriminated against, can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. The LMS will treat all formal grievances seriously and will investigate the facts. Confidentiality will be observed as far as this is possible although in certain cases, complete confidentiality may restrict the investigation process and solution.

10.9.2 If an employee becomes aware of discriminatory behaviour within LMS, they should inform their line manager or the PA to the Executive Secretary as soon as possible.

10.9.3 Employees should not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy.