

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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## 1. Introduction

Plymouth Marine Laboratory (PML) Group is committed to providing an inclusive environment that is welcoming and supportive for all members of our community to work and study, free from discriminatory policies and practices where all staff, students, visitors and job applicants are treated only on the basis of their merits, including abilities and potential.

The policy relates to all forms of discrimination covered by the Equality Act 2010: age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and pregnancy/maternity/paternity. See Appendix one for definitions.

Equality is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are not treated differently or less favourably on the basis of their specific protected characteristic.

Equity is about recognising differences and actively addressing anything that may disadvantage members of any particular group in being able to participate fully within PML.

Diversity aims to recognise, respect and value people's differences to contribute and realise their full potential by promoting an inclusive culture.

**Inclusion is the practice of including people in a way that is fair for all, values everyone, and empowers each person to be themselves.**

## 2. Purpose of the document

The document provides:

- i. An overview of PML's commitments to create an environment that is based on dignity and respect, where difference is valued and celebrated, enriching our community;
- ii. Clarity on expectations for all employees, students and visitors to act in accordance with the policy and our clear position that any bullying or harassment in the workplace is totally unacceptable and subject to proportionate and appropriate action;
- iii. Signposting to relevant policies, procedures and guidance to deliver PML's commitment;
- iv. Reference to relevant legislation;
- v. Details on how PML will monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

## 3. Scope of the document

This document applies to all PML and PML Applications employees, students, visitors, Trustees and Directors, and includes working in PML premises together with external events where employees are representing PML, such as hospitality or training events. Subsequent reference in the document to "employees" is intended to include students, and where applicable, visitors.

The policy also applies to applicants within the recruitment processes for employees, students and Trustees.

#### 4. PML Group's Commitment

PML Group is a diverse, multicultural and international community. As a member of that community all employees, students, visitors, contractors, Trustees and Directors can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. As an organisation we are committed to working in an inclusive way with the local, national and international communities *with whom we partner and whom we impact*.

PML has an EDI Committee which represents employees and students across PML. The purpose of the committee is to develop and monitor the effectiveness of EDI Operating Objectives, the EDI and related policies and provide advice and recommendations to SMT in relation to identifying and reducing inequality.

The EDI reports into SMT, providing progress reports and where appropriate, recommendations for proposals and investment.

Equity, diversity and inclusion underpins all our work and is at the heart of what we are and what we do. Our commitment is not restricted to the minimum legal requirements of equality legislation, as we aim to deliver best practice whenever possible (see appendix one). This is reflected in PML's Strategy 2020-2025 which embraces the UN Sustainable Development Goals, including:

**SDG10 Reduced Inequality:** *To reduce inequalities, policies should be universal in principle, paying attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations.*

**SDG5 Gender Equality:** *Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.*

In 2015 PML committed to the Athena SWAN award to address gender equality, focusing on gender, together with intersectionality, for example, how gender and ethnicity interlink. Going forward incorporating wider EDI practices PML has committed to the Investors in Diversity Award to replace Athena Swan.

#### 5. Responsibilities

The Chief Executive, supported by the Senior Management Team, is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and monitored. Ultimately, the Board of Trustees is accountable for ensuring PML complies with its legal obligations under the Equality Act, including the general duty to have due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;

- Advance equality of opportunity;
- Foster good relations.

PML's [Core Values](#) include "responsibility, integrity and respect" which include expectations of behaviour for our employees:

- **Responsibility:** Employees are responsible for ensuring that their behaviour is inclusive and supportive of all members of PML and does not undermine, intimidate, or discriminate against colleagues and visitors;
- **Integrity:** Employees are expected to act with integrity, demonstrating professional and appropriate behaviour whilst at work;
- **Respect:** Employees are expected to show consideration and thoughtfulness in relation to staff, clients and visitors regardless of an individual's background, culture and belief.

In addition to adhering to the behaviours outlined above, employees are expected to participate in EDI training provided.

Guidance has been developed to support the implementation of this policy in relation to examples of inclusive language. This guidance can be found on the HR Intranet [here](#).

Human Resources (HR) are responsible for providing advice, guidance, support and policies in relation to equity, diversity and inclusion. This includes individual support, together with advising on the development of actions, monitoring progress and reviewing related policies to ensure they support actions.

In addition, HR will provide and coordinate activities that raise awareness of diversity and inclusion, including training and raising awareness through information and links to events that celebrate diversity and inclusion.

Managers and student supervisors are expected to participate in relevant training, including unconscious bias and recruitment and selection. They are responsible for adhering to policy and taking early interventions when issues are raised with the aim of informal resolution where possible.

The Head of Post Graduate Studies (HoPGS) is responsible for providing advice and guidance in relation to student recruitment and supervision processes that are fair, reasonable and free from bias. In addition, the HoPGS will provide confidential advice and guidance for students.

Welfare Officers are responsible for providing confidential advice and support for employees.

## 6. Signposting to relevant policies

Equity, diversity and inclusion are embedded in all of our activities within PML, with specific relevance in the following policies:

- [Respect at work](#). This policy includes definitions of bullying and/or harassment and where an employee can access support, how to report incidents and action to address issues and possible outcomes.
- [Recruitment Policy](#). This policy includes how to ensure the recruitment and selection process is fair and reasonable based on individual merit and free from unlawful bias throughout the process of determining role requirements, advertising, shortlisting interviewing and selection decisions.
- [Pay policy](#). This policy includes guidance on an objective process for establishing pay that is free from unlawful bias following a new appointment, promotion or award of a bonus.
- [Merit Promotion](#). This policy includes guidance on ensuring promotion criteria are applied in a consistent, fair and objective way based on individual abilities, skills and knowledge.
- [Individual Merit Award](#). This policy includes guidance on ensuring merit awards are applied in a consistent fair and objective way.
- [Job Levelling](#). This policy includes guidance on ensuring job evaluation is applied in a consistent fair and objective way.
- [Career Management Review](#). This policy includes guidance on ensuring that the CMR is implemented in a fair, objective and respectful way.
- [Maternity, adoption, paternity and shared parental leave policies](#). These policies ensure that we are meeting statutory obligations and in addition enable employees taking family related breaks feel engaged and part of the community throughout their leave, with the opportunity to return to their role with support to be able to achieve their best.
- [Flexible working policy](#). This policy includes the procedure for employees to make a request to vary their working pattern to meet their personal needs.
- [PML Staff Sickness Absence](#). This policy recognizes the needs of employees with a physical or hidden disability, and ensures that adjustments can be made to support optimum attendance at work.
- [Redundancy Policy](#). This policy includes information in relation to a redundancy process, with commitments to ensure selection criteria and processes are undertaken fairly free from unlawful bias.
- [Safeguarding Policy](#). This policy aims to protect people, particularly young adults and children, and vulnerable adults, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with PML.
- [Code of Practice for supervision of postgraduate students](#). This document includes guidance for supervisors to ensure students are treated fairly and reasonably. Students should also refer to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policies of their host University.
- [Menopause Workplace Guidance](#). This document provides information and advice to support individuals approaching or going through menopause, and also for managers and those who work alongside colleagues.
- *Gender reassignment and Trans policy-under development*

**7. Confidentiality**

Welfare Officers, Prospect Representatives, Head of Postgraduate Studies and HR will treat information provided by the employee in confidence, unless withholding information puts any individual, property or premises at risk.

**8. Implementation of policy**

The Chief Executive is responsible for the implementation of the EDI Policy with advice from the EDI Committee and HoHR. However, all members of PML community are expected to take responsibility in playing their part in enabling and supporting an inclusive and diverse workplace. In particular, individuals who witness inappropriate behaviour by a member of PML against others are encouraged to call out inappropriate behaviour and be prepared to contribute statements to support an investigation, where required.

Allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be treated seriously with an investigation and disciplinary action where there is evidence of a serious and deliberate breach of this policy and the Equality Act 2010. This includes evidence of harassment, bullying or discrimination.

<b>EDI Policy</b>	Changes highlighted in blue
<b>This Version</b>	3
<b>Last update</b>	June 2022
<b>Policy owner</b>	Head of Human Resources
<b>EDI Committee finalise draft</b>	16 November 2022
<b>SMT Review</b>	21 February 2023
<b>Board sign off</b>	23 March 2023

**Appendix one - PML’s Best Practice approach to protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010 and beyond**

This document has been written as guidance to support the implementation of PML’s Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy in relation to going beyond compliance and promoting best practice with regards to the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

At PML we believe socioeconomic background and body type are additional characteristics that should be protected from discrimination.

**Compliance = Equality**

Meeting legislative requirements for Equality – Equality Act 2010

**Best practice = Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

Taking action beyond meeting legislative requirements

Policies written and established based on code of practice

Strategies created to establish long-term, continuous good practices

<b>Age</b>	The Act protects people of all ages. However, different treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if it can be justified, i.e. if you can demonstrate that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.	
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>	
To avoid discrimination on the grounds of age, including avoidance of language in advertisements, such as attracting “young / dynamic” applicants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PML is committed to ensuring that information relating to age is not accessible when considering employment decisions.</li> </ul>	

<b>Disability</b>	Under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.	
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>	
The Act requires an employer to make reasonable adjustments to enable an applicant or employee to access employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PML is committed to the ‘Disability Confidence Employer’ scheme and will include a candidate who has a disability on the shortlist for interview if they meet the essential selection criteria.</li> </ul>	

<b>Race</b>	In the Equality Act ‘race’ includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.	
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>	

To avoid discrimination on the grounds of race, including avoidance of language in advertisements, such as requiring “GSCE English and maths”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PML should have an ‘Anti-racism’ policy</li> </ul>
<b>Sex</b>	Both men and women are protected under the Act.
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
To prevent discrimination on the grounds of gender, including avoidance of language in advertisements that may encourage stereotypically male traits, such as “assertive”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PML has created a ‘Menopause workplace guidance’ document</li> <li>• PML calculates their annual gender pay-gap data within the annual EDI report</li> <li>• Advertisements are checked for gender bias</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	The Act protects lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups, also known as LGBT.
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
To prevent discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contractual adoption pay updated to mirror the benefits under the maternity pay to ensure same sex couples are not at a disadvantaged when seeking adoption benefits</li> </ul>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>  To prevent discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment.	<p>The Act provides protection for transsexual people. A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. The Act no longer requires a person to be under medical supervision to be protected – so a woman who decides to live as a man but does not undergo any medical procedures would be covered.</p> <p>Where transsexual people are absent from work or study because they propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment, it is discrimination to treat them less favourably than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured.</p>
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
The Act requires an employer to treat transsexual employees fairly, where transsexual people are absent from work or study because they propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment, it is discrimination to treat them less favourably than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PML should develop a ‘Transgender policy’</li> <li>• PML is exploring options for providing a gender-neutral toilet</li> <li>• PML encourage staff to use pronouns in their email signature to be more inclusive by providing positive role model examples</li> </ul>
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	The Act protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination.
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
To prevent discrimination on the grounds of marriage and civil partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PML has a shared parental leave policy and has removed gender assumptions from maternity and adoption policies.</li> </ul>

<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled.
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
The Act requires an employer to make reasonable adjustments to enable an applicant or employee to access employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PML is committed to a generous maternity, adoption and parental leave policy. This also includes leave for infertility appointments.</li> <li>• PML provides a space for employees to express milk</li> <li>• PML policies do not include gender assumptions.</li> </ul>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	In the Equality Act, religion includes any religion. It also includes a lack of religion, in other words employees or jobseekers are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious philosophical belief or a lack of such belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief. Discrimination because of religion or belief can occur even where both the discriminator and recipient are of the same religion or belief.
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
To prevent discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PML provides a designated space for wellbeing which can be booked for people to practice their religion or other spiritual practice</li> </ul>

The characteristics listed below are not part of the Equality Act 2010, but PML still supports the following as best practice:

<b>Body type</b>	
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
This is not currently included in the Equality Act as a protected characteristic, unless linked to a disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PML is committed to subsidising an inclusive Sports and Social Club that respects the diverse range of activities and societies that employees want to engage with regardless of personal circumstances.</li> </ul>
<b>Socioeconomic background</b>	
<b>Compliance</b>	<b>Best practice</b>
This is not currently included in the Equality Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To seek opportunities to engage with students from underrepresented communities where fewer participants engage in natural sciences through work experience and placements.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To seek opportunities to offer paid work experience to avoid negative selection of students based on their economic resources.</li><li>• Signposting funding opportunities for students for MSc projects.</li></ul>
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**Appendix two: Support available**

Reporting or other manager	You are encouraged to discuss concerns with your manager in the first instance if you feel this is possible. Your manager will be able to provide support and signposting to reach an acceptable resolution.	
Prospect Union	<a href="#">Prospect</a> is the Trade Union recognised by PML and is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. If you are a member of Prospect, you can access support and advice from your union in confidence.	<a href="mailto:ProspectReps@pml.ac.uk">ProspectReps@pml.ac.uk</a>
Human Resources	You can talk to the Head of HR or HR Manager in confidence about any concerns in relation to equality, equity, diversity and inclusion. This includes issues directly related to you, or where you may have witnessed any unacceptable behaviour. HR can offer advice and guidance in relation to reaching a resolution on either an informal or formal process as needed and appropriate.	Julia Davy: Call: 633122 Email: <a href="mailto:juda@pml.ac.uk">juda@pml.ac.uk</a>  Lizzi Hamilton Call: 633163 Email: <a href="mailto:eljm@pml.ac.uk">eljm@pml.ac.uk</a>
Head of Post Graduate Studies	Post graduate students are encouraged to discuss concerns with the Head of Post Graduate Studies. The HoPGS will provide confidential support, advice and signposting.	Ruth Airs Call: 633450 Email: <a href="mailto:ruai@pml.co.uk">ruai@pml.co.uk</a>
Mentors	Mentors can offer advice, support and encouragement, including signposting, building confidence and being assertive in tackling undermining or discriminatory behaviour.	Please contact HR: <a href="mailto:humanresourcesgroup@pml.ac.uk">humanresourcesgroup@pml.ac.uk</a> for a current list of mentors
PML Welfare Officers	Welfare exists to support the emotional and mental wellbeing of our staff and is available to everyone based at PML and PML Applications along with visiting students, visiting scientists and other workers. The <a href="#">PML Welfare Service</a> provides a safe place for you to discuss any personal or work related issues. Welfare officers are professionally trained by NERC, and support offered is impartial, non-judgmental and confidential.	Andy Rees: Call: 633410 Email: <a href="mailto:apre@pml.c.uk">apre@pml.c.uk</a> and Jessica Heard Call: 633167 Email: <a href="mailto:jessh@pml.ac.uk">jessh@pml.ac.uk</a>