



THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHY

# Single Equality Scheme & Action Plan 2012 - 2015



# **The British School of Osteopathy Single Equality Scheme.**

## **1. Introduction**

In October 2010 the Equality Act 2010 came into force. This new legislation replaces all previous anti-discrimination law with a single act. The Equality Act consolidates and streamlines the law and introduces new duties.

The British School of Osteopathy, in common with other providers of Higher Education, has, as part of the Equality Act 2010, a duty to publish, in December 2011, evidence to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty.

## **2. What is the general equality duty?**

The general equality duty is designed to help HEI's fulfil the requirements of the Equality Act. The general duty has three aims; it requires HEI's to have due regard to the need to:

- combat discrimination, victimisation and harassment
- promote equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

This involves considering the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low
- foster good relations between people from different groups

These aims constitute the general duty of the Equality Act, and institutions must be proactive in meeting them. Publication of a Single Equality Scheme (SES) will ensure compliance with the general duty.

The equality duty covers the following protected characteristics that are recognised within the Equality Act:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

It also applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination in employment

The British School of Osteopathy has a partnership agreement with the University of Bedfordshire, which validates its Master of Osteopathy degree course. As a partner organisation the School complies with legislation governing the policies, administration and practices of the University. The BSO Single Equality Scheme is, however, specific to the BSO, and refers to the School's own premises, its students, staff, and clinic patients, outside agents and contractors, and other stakeholders.

Like the Disability Discrimination Act, Part 4; the Single Equality Act has 'specific duties' which public sector organisations & HEI's are subject to. The general duty requires HEI's to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, and to publish evidence of compliance with this. Consequently the BSO has produced the BSO Single Equality Scheme (SES) and Action Plan. The SES is a public document stipulating how the BSO will comply with the new duties. It will be published (upon request) in various formats to suit its range of stakeholders.

Education providers, corporately and as individuals, must now facilitate and encourage the full participation in Higher Education of all protected groups within the Act. This may place unfamiliar demands on teaching, administrative, IT, library and clinic staffs, all of whom must suit their practices to accommodate the needs of such persons. This includes adapting the physical environment and ensuring necessary aids are available. It can also mean adjusting recruitment strategies and administrative procedures, education and training practices, and methods of assessment and examination.

The decision to publish and implement the BSO Single Equality Scheme represents a major advance in promoting equality, and must be recognised as such by the whole School. All staff and students are required to be aware of the intentions of the Equality Act 2010, to be familiar with the SES and the Action Plan, to support their implementation, and to recognise a personal responsibility to comply with the regulations outlined above. A commitment to whole-School training in the regulations can be found in Stage One of the Action Plan.

### **3. Background to the School's SES.**

The School occupies two sites. The main building in Borough High St, which houses all its administrative offices, teaching and training rooms, library, IT and Student Support services, and the second; a fully operational osteopathy clinic in Southwark Bridge Road. Both premises are already compliant with the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995, 2001 and amendments in providing practical aids for disabled access to all parts of the School, including wheelchair access. Aids are also installed to assist those with visual or hearing impairments. On site parking space is limited but prioritises disabled parking. The Estates Manager is responsible for ensuring that the School's facilities are accessible to all, and for overseeing such further modifications as may be required.

Welfare, learning and personal support are available to all students in a dedicated department. The Manager of Student Support & Equality reports to the Equality Working Group, which monitors compliance with current legislation and makes recommendations in all equality matters.

All the School's Tutors and Clinic Staff have professional or occupational training in equality matters. This training is also a prescribed element of the School's taught courses. Staff and students meet routinely with patients who have varying degrees of disability and shared disability awareness informs the ethos of the School. The Action Plan accompanying this SES stipulates that all further staff training has reference to the general duties of the Equality Act. Training is currently available to Directors in their duties and responsibilities, and the Principal and Senior Managers' active involvement in the preparation of the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan ensure that they are conversant with the new regulations.

The present document is produced in accordance with the intention and legal requirements of the Equality Act but should be read in conjunction with the School's existing equal-opportunity policies in respect of

- age
- disability or learning difficulty
- family and social status
- gender and gender reassignment
- lawful political belief
- marital status
- pregnancy
- race, colour, ethnicity, nationality or national origins
- religion, faith or belief, including philosophical belief
- sexual orientation.

All staff, students, clinic patients, and others associated with the School are protected by the above policies. The School will take immediate and appropriate action if any instance of unfair discrimination, harassment or infringement of human rights arises from any of the above, or other, causes. The fairness and justice of its policies are continuously monitored and regularly reviewed in line with legislative change and natural justice

Protection under equality legislation also extends to partners, consultants, contractors for services and visitors. The School makes every effort to ensure

that any consultants, partners, contractors or other agents are themselves compliant with all aspects of Equality legislation.

#### **4. Developing the Single Equality Scheme objectives**

Senior Managers and representatives of all departments of the School, its students, and clinic patients have participated directly or indirectly in developing the SES objectives.

The Equality Working Group was formed in November 2010 and consists of staff, the Student Union and student and patient volunteers. The group meets at least two times per academic year and reports to the Senior Management Team.

#### **5. Values, Principles and Mission of the SES**

In furtherance of its commitment to diversity and inclusiveness, the School's SES brings equality issues to the forefront of strategic planning. It acknowledges that the experience and expertise of all protected groups, as students, employees and service users, is an invaluable resource in reformulating policies and practices to eliminate barriers to their full participation in the life of the School.

As the School's responsible body, Directors will ensure that the School upgrades, improves and adapts its provisions to facilitate the wider participation in its education and training of, and its employment opportunities for, all protected persons in keeping with the ethos of the School, and in compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

#### **6. Protected Stakeholders in the School and the Community**

The consultation undertaken with protected stakeholders in drawing up the SES will continue throughout the progressive implementation of the School's Action Plan. Where possible, the Student Union and the Equality Manager will conduct surveys to assess the impact of changes within the School, and the clinic. Disclosure will be encouraged by revision of the School's application forms for students and employees with the intention of ensuring that disabilities and other

relevant information may be more readily disclosed and properly accommodated.

## **7. Directors, Managers and Partner University.**

The Principal and Directors, in advance of finalisation of the SES, have been briefed on the latest regulations of the Equality Act, and have met to discuss their implementation. Their intentions are formally stated above. The Principal and Vice Principal have been involved in, and have endorsed, all stages of the SES's development. Senior Managers, or their representatives, and the Equality Working Group will meet when the SES is finalised to discuss their key roles in its implementation. Directors' approval will have been given to the finalised SES and Action Plan immediately before publication.

## **8. Impact Assessments**

Equality Impact assessments will be carried out on all policies, procedures and practices. The Equality Working Group will be responsible for this action and will make recommendations to the Senior Management Team if action is required.

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## **9. Data Collection**

Significant data is already recorded under the School's existing Equality Policies including: ethnicity, gender, age, and disability. The Equality Manager has collated information on present and past disabled students, including retention rates, educational outcomes and reasons for withdrawals from the School. This provides a baseline for future measures. Other departments are currently preparing their baseline measures regarding all protected characteristics. The School appreciates that these data relate only to disclosed information.

## **10. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Staging the Action Plan facilitates annual monitoring. This progress will be reported through the Equality Working Group and to Directors and Senior Management, via the Student Support Department & Equality Review. The evaluation will be used to adjust the Action Plan, as necessary. Protected stakeholders will be invited to have responsibility for monitoring progress in the

sections or departments of the School where they work or study or receive treatment or individual support.

## **11. Implementation of SES**

It is anticipated that implementation of the SES over its initial three years will proceed in the stages outlined below.

### Stage One

Publish SES - December 2011

Raise awareness of Equality Act/ Diversity Week - Spring Term 2012

### Stage Two

Introduce Equality Impact Assessments - December 2011

Develop procedures to encourage disclosure – By 2014

### Stage Three

Review progress – September 2012

Collect, collate and publish data – Annually

Assess impact of SES implementation - Annually

## **12. Assessing the Outcomes of the Single Equality Scheme**

Among the priorities recognised in designing the SES is the need to establish new systems for collecting and collating information, and determining the School's success in achieving the outcomes it has identified. The School is accountable to its partner university, to the Higher Education Funding Council and to the General Osteopathic Council. Progress reports of these bodies are expected to reflect and further inform the School's implementation of its SES.

## **13. Conclusion**

The British School of Osteopathy undertakes to implement this Single Equality Scheme in successive stages, and to make such amendments and additions to it as are indicated by continual monitoring and evaluation of its progress. The School subscribes unreservedly to the intention to remove barriers to the engagement of all protected characteristics as full participants in the School's activities and to provide enhanced opportunities for this in keeping with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and related legislation.



**Review Date.**

The Single Equality Scheme & Plan runs for three years. Its progress will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team and the Board, and amended as appropriate.

First Review Date - December 2012.

Second Review Date - August 2013

(To be signed and dated by/on behalf of the Responsible Body.)

***The British School of Osteopathy would like to thank The Equality Challenge Unit for all their help and support in writing this document, and allowing the use of their resources.***

## **The British School of Osteopathy Equality Action Plan**

In November 2010 The British School of Osteopathy Equality Working Group (EW group) was formed to develop the Equality Action Plan. Through meetings the group undertook consultation with staff and students and together prepared the BSO Equality Action Plan. The Action Plan will work in conjunction with the BSO strategic aims for the coming three years.

### **Student and staff consultation**

Students and staff protected within the Act were invited to join the group for informal discussions focusing on issues which included:

- access to information
- employment
- removal or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- meeting the needs of people with protected characteristics
- student support
- teaching and learning
- policies and procedures
- fostering good relations between people from different groups

### **Equality Action Plan Development**

The aims and targets of the Action Plan were developed from the findings of the EW group and senior members of staff involved in the key areas. The Equality Action Plan aims and targets were developed to meet a number of criteria including:

- alignment with strategic aims of the school
- measurable aims to facilitate the review of performance against targets
- achievable targets within operational budget
- responsibility allocated to appropriate staff members for aim attainment
- effective meeting of the needs of students and staff with protected characteristics, as identified during staff and student consultation

Resources for provision of the Equality Action Plan will be considered annually within departmental operational plans and included in annual budgets. The Equality Action Plan was endorsed by the Senior Management Team in November 2011.

## **Equality Action Plan Annual Review Process**

The BSO strategic aims are addressed annually within each key area Departmental Operational Plan. Resources for funding, required to address these aims, are decided in April. The Equality Action Plan annual review will be incorporated in this cycle and the following strategies will be utilised to facilitate compliance with the Plan.

1. Aims and targets relevant to each department of the school will be extracted from the Action Plan each year and forwarded to the person responsible for attaining the target. This process will occur annually during March to ensure that the Action Plan objectives are included in the planning of the process of Departmental Operational Plans
2. Aims and targets relevant to each department of the school will be reviewed against performance measures each June - September.
3. Information from the performance review will be collated into an annual report for the Senior Management Team & the Board of Governors. Any gaps existing between targets and performance will result in appropriate measures being undertaken to ensure non-achieved goals and targets are met in the following Operational planning cycle.

## **Equality Action Plan Communication Processes**

Ensuring that the whole school community is aware of, and committed to, the Equality Action Plan is the first stage of the Action Plan, to be completed by December 2011. Strategies to achieve this will include:

- publications of the Equality Action Plan to be made available to all staff and students through the library and staff common room
- access to the Equality Action Plan to be available via the BSO website and internal intranet
- staff with a designated responsibility for targets in the Action Plan will be contacted during the annual operational planning cycle to incorporate Action Plan aims and targets

Activity	Action	Strategic Aim	Undertaken By	Timescale
<p>Publish and promote the BSO Single Equality scheme and Action Plan</p> <p>University policies, plans and strategies e.g University Plan, Learning and Teaching Strategy, Widening Participation Strategy</p> <p>Produce &amp; Publish Equality &amp; Diversity Statement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Publish Scheme and Action Plan via web with hardcopies made available in the library, HR and Student Support Department</li> <li>▪ Send letter to all staff members advising them of the Reviewed Equality Scheme and Plan</li> <li>▪ Ensure that these are inclusive, consistent across school and central services, transparent and clearly communicated and available to students and staff.</li> <li>▪ To continue to include equality impact assessment from the point of inception for all new School policies and procedures</li> <li>▪ To ensure the Schools commitment to equality and diversity is highlighted in key College documents, including the prospectus, annual report, staff handbook</li> </ul> <p>To produce an Equality &amp; Diversity Statement which will replace the Equal Opportunities statement</p>	<p>Aim 1</p> <p>Aim 1</p> <p>Aim 1</p> <p>Aim 1</p> <p>Aim 1</p> <p>Aim 1</p>	<p>The Equality Manager</p> <p>The Equality Manager</p> <p>Registrar/Course Team Leader/Policy holders</p> <p>Equality Manager</p> <p>Equality Manager</p> <p>Equality Manager/HR Officer</p>	<p>September 2013</p> <p>September 2013</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>December 2013</p>
<p>Diversity Week</p>	<p><b>Key Objective: To improve relations between all protected characteristic groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduce Diversity Week, a range of events and activities to promote equality and diversity, including: relevant diversity issues, debates &amp; informative talks, wellbeing issues</li> </ul>		<p>Equality Manager/Student union</p>	<p>Annually</p>

Activity	Action	Strategic Aim	Undertaken By	Timescale
Prospective students and applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ all procedures are inclusive and consistent</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Aim 1	Admissions Manager	On-going
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ disclosure and confidentiality procedures are robust</li> </ul>	Aim 1	Admissions Manager	On-going
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disability Support Handouts are included when sending out offers to students who have disclosed a disability on their UCAS form</li> </ul>	Aim 1	Admissions Manager	On-going
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure funding for anticipatory adjustments to Open Day &amp; I &amp; E Day is included within the Student Support Budget</li> </ul>	Aim 1	Admissions Manager & Disability Advisor	On-going
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ that promotional materials &amp; handouts give accurate information about the University and services provided</li> </ul>	Aim 1	Admissions Manager and Student Support Department	Over 3 year period
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Key objective: Increase percentage of BME students: measurable against current data</b></li> </ul>	Aim 1	Widening participation Officer/Admissions Manager	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure marketing materials and activities are diverse and inclusive in respect of age, gender, disability, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation</li> </ul>	Aim 1	Marketing Officer	On going
Facilities and services for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unify and promote support services</li> </ul>	10	Student Support Dept	On-going
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain communication between Admissions staff and Disability Advisor regarding informing of incoming students with declared disability.</li> </ul>	9	Admissions Manager	On-going
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure funding for anticipatory measures to reasonably adjust learning facilities and services</li> </ul>	17	Disability Advisor	Annually

Exams & Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the option of reasonable adjustments for disabled students are met e.g coloured paper upon request, separate room for dyslexic students, stickers on exam papers.</li> <li>To take religious holidays into consideration when setting exam dates</li> </ul>	Aim 2	Registrar	On-going
		Aim 2	Registrar	Annually
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Strategic Aim</b>	<b>Undertaken By</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
IT, libraries and learning resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all software is current</li> <li>Maintain and update all learning resources for disabled students</li> </ul>	10	Learning Advisor	Annually
Clinic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the diversity of clinic patients by direct marketing to the disabled community through local support groups</li> </ul>	Aim 6	BSO Marketing Officer	On-going
HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide mandatory training and briefing for all academic and support staff via lunch time sessions in clinic and Faculty weekends</li> <li>Regular communication via staff updates regarding equality and diversity issues incorporating all nine equality strands</li> <li>Incorporate Equality &amp; Diversity awareness training during the staff induction process</li> <li>Monitor staff grievances and complaints linked to equality &amp; diversity issues incorporating all nine equality strands</li> <li>Ensure the staff Equal Ops policy is reviewed annually and included within the Staff Handbook</li> <li><b>Key objective: To endeavor to increase the</b></li> </ul>	Aim 1	HR / Student Welfare & Equality Manager r / Outside org	On-going
		Aim 5	HR / Student Welfare & Equality Manager /Outside org	On-going
		Aim 5	HR/ Student Welfare & Equality Manager	On-going
		Aim 5	HR	On-going
		Aim 5	HR	Annually
		Aim 5	HR & Head of Postgraduate Studies	Over three year period

	<b>proportion of BME members of faculty by offering teacher training on our own PG cert course: measurable against current data</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Strategic Aim</b>	<b>Undertaken By</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Resources/funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Actively promote funds available to support disabled students and to further develop provision</li> <li>▪ Ensure that anticipatory funding is available</li> </ul>	<p>Aim 1</p> <p>Aim 1</p>	<p>Disability Advisor</p> <p>Principal</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>December 2015</p>
Feedback and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collect statistics on application, admission, participation and retention of students with a disability</li> <li>▪ Introduce equal ops questionnaires including religion and sexual orientation at enrolment to be stored on student information systems</li> <li>▪ Collect statistics on application, admission and retention of BME students</li> </ul>	<p>Aim 1</p> <p>Aim 1</p> <p>Aim 1</p>	<p>Equality Manager</p> <p>Equality Manager/Registrar/IT</p> <p>Equality Manager/Registry/Admission Manager</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Sept 2012</p> <p>Annually</p>
Board and Senior Management	<p>To provide leadership on equality and diversity issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board member to attend Equality Committee Meetings</li> </ul>	Aim 5	Principal & Chief Executive	On-going
Physical Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure the physical features of the Equality Act are maintained and make reasonable adjustments where/when necessary</li> <li>▪ Estates will continue to work with the Equality Manager, identifying changing requirements of staff and students with from the protected groups.</li> </ul>	<p>Aim 1</p> <p>Aim 1</p>	<p>Facilities Manager</p> <p>Facilities Manager / Disability Advisor</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>On –going</p>

