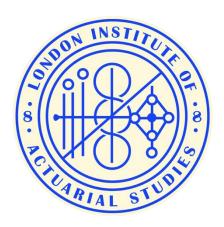# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The London Institute of Actuarial Studies (LIAS) is committed to creating an inclusive, respectful and empowering learning and working environment where students and staff of all backgrounds can thrive. As a new institution preparing to welcome our first cohort in 2026, we recognise the unique opportunity to embed equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into every aspect of our institutional culture and operations from the outset.

This policy outlines LIAS's planned approach to promoting equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and advancing inclusion in line with the Equality Act 2010, the Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration and the expectations of our UK university partners and the QAA Quality Code.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Access and Participation Statement
- Recruitment and Admissions Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- Student Protection Plan

2. OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

This policy applies to all members of the LIAS community, including students, staff, applicants, visitors, and contractors. It outlines our expectations for inclusive behaviour and equitable treatment across all interactions, regardless of an individual's formal relationship with the institution.

LIAS fully aligns its values and practices with the principles set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Although not legally classified as a public authority, we are committed to upholding the spirit of the PSED by actively seeking to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between different groups.

LIAS recognises all nine protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

These principles guide our decision-making, strategic planning, academic delivery and staff development, and are embedded across the institutional culture from the outset.

LIAS values diversity in all its forms, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic background, religion or belief, nationality, and caring responsibilities. Our commitment to EDI is built upon the following core principles:

- **Equity of Access**: We aim to ensure that all prospective students and staff have fair and equitable access to opportunities at LIAS, regardless of background.
- **Inclusive Culture**: We will cultivate an institutional culture that actively challenges discrimination, harassment and victimisation and supports a sense of belonging.
- **Proactive Inclusion**: We will take active steps to identify and remove structural barriers that affect underrepresented or disadvantaged groups.
- **Intersectional Approach**: We recognise that individuals' experiences are shaped by overlapping identities and we will apply this understanding in shaping our policies, services and support.

3. EMBEDDING EDI ACROSS THE INSTITUTION

At LIAS, we believe that equality, diversity and inclusion should not be confined to statements or single departments, but actively embedded into all areas of institutional life. As a newly established provider, we are committed to integrating EDI principles across our governance, curriculum, student support, staffing structures and community engagement. The following subsections describe how EDI will be operationalised in each area to create a truly inclusive and equitable educational environment.

3.1. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Effective governance is fundamental to embedding and sustaining our institutional commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. At LIAS, we recognise that inclusive leadership must be modelled from the top of the organisation, with clear structures in place to oversee implementation, evaluate progress and ensure accountability. As a new provider, we are establishing governance processes that embed EDI at the heart of academic planning, policy-making and institutional development.

- The Academic Board will be responsible for ensuring institutional oversight of EDI commitments, reporting annually on progress to the Board of Governors (once constituted).
- EDI considerations will be embedded into all major policy approvals, curriculum decisions and quality assurance activities.
- The Director of Academic Quality and Student Experience will hold institutional responsibility for EDI. This role will lead the development and implementation of the EDI Strategy, coordinate annual reviews of progress against objectives and report formally to the Academic Board at least once per academic year. The Director will also oversee engagement with student and staff representatives to ensure that EDI remains a shared and responsive institutional priority.

3.2. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Our students are central to our mission, and we are committed to creating an inclusive, accessible, and supportive environment in which every learner can thrive. As a new institution, LIAS is uniquely

positioned to design its student experience with inclusion built in from the start, removing structural barriers and embedding equity throughout the learning journey.

We also recognise the importance of embedding EDI principles directly into our academic curriculum. This includes ensuring that course content reflects diverse perspectives, assessment methods are fair and accessible, and that inclusive pedagogies are applied across all programmes. EDI considerations will be a formal part of curriculum development, validation, and periodic review processes, ensuring that our educational offer supports equitable learning outcomes for all student groups.

- We will design our programmes and services to support diverse learners, including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, neurodiverse learners and mature students. Our curriculum and learning support systems will be inclusive by design, integrating universal design for learning (UDL) principles and flexible pathways.
- We are committed to ensuring all digital content and online platforms used for teaching, learning and student services will comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2, making them accessible to users with a wide range of visual, auditory, cognitive and physical needs.
- As LIAS establishes a physical presence, all campus facilities will be planned and developed in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) standards. This includes the provision of step-free access, accessible toilets, quiet spaces, assistive technologies and clear wayfinding signage.
- Specific support initiatives will be offered to LGBTQ+ students, students of faith, care-experienced students and those with mental health conditions to ensure access to safe spaces, tailored guidance and appropriate academic support., including reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, neurodiverse learners and mature students. Our curriculum and learning support systems will be inclusive by design, integrating universal design for learning (UDL) principles and flexible pathways.
- Specific support initiatives will be offered to LGBTQ+ students, students of faith, care-experienced students and those with mental health conditions to ensure access to safe spaces, tailored guidance and appropriate academic support.
- Staff will receive training in inclusive pedagogies and student support.
- Data will be analysed annually to identify differential outcomes (e.g. attainment gaps) and targeted interventions will be put in place.

3.3. STAFF RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Our staff are central to the academic excellence and inclusive ethos of LIAS. We are committed to recruiting, supporting and developing a workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. As a new provider, we recognise the opportunity to build inclusive staffing practices from the outset, ensuring equity and representation at all levels of the organisation.

- Recruitment, induction and promotion practices will be designed to attract and retain a diverse academic and professional workforce. This includes proactive outreach to underrepresented groups, inclusive job advertisements, accessible recruitment materials and the use of diverse interview panels to mitigate unconscious bias. Particular attention will be paid to encouraging applications from individuals with protected characteristics, including disabled applicants, neurodivergent candidates and those with caring responsibilities.
- Equality monitoring will be undertaken at each stage of the employee lifecycle (recruitment, onboarding, promotion and exit) to inform future strategies, address disparities and develop positive action initiatives where appropriate.
- Staff CPD will include mandatory training on unconscious bias, inclusive leadership, anti-discrimination practice and inclusive learning environments. Opportunities for staff to engage in

allyship and mentorship schemes will be encouraged to embed EDI values across institutional culture.

3.4. TACKLING HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

Creating a safe and respectful learning and working environment is essential to the success of our EDI strategy. As a new institution, LIAS is committed to embedding a culture where all members of our community feel secure and supported and where unacceptable behaviours such as harassment, bullying and discrimination are addressed swiftly and effectively through clear processes.

- LIAS will adopt a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, bullying, victimisation and discrimination.
- A clear reporting and response procedure will be published, aligned with our Complaints and Appeals Procedure, outlining steps for disclosure, investigation and resolution, with specified timescales and protections for all parties.
- Training and guidance will be provided to staff and student leaders to ensure they understand how to identify, prevent and respond to incidents of harassment and discrimination.
- Support will be available for students and staff who raise concerns, including access to confidential advice, safeguarding officers and signposting to external specialist services such as counselling, legal aid and advocacy groups.
- All cases will be monitored for patterns and trends and anonymised data will be reported to the Academic Board to inform policy and preventative action.

4. EDI OBJECTIVES AND MONITORING

This policy is closely aligned with the LIAS Access and Participation Statement and will underpin any future Access and Participation Plan (APP) developed in partnership with our validating university and submitted to the Office for Students (OfS). It serves as a foundational component of our strategy to increase access, ensure student success and enable progression into high-quality graduate outcomes for learners from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds.

The EDI objectives outlined below are integral to the delivery of our widening participation agenda and are designed to complement institutional targets set out in our access strategy. As our data maturity and institutional capability grow, the EDI policy will play a central role in identifying, addressing and monitoring areas of differential experience and outcome, in line with OfS expectations for equality of opportunity.

As part of our commitment to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion from inception, LIAS will establish a set of measurable EDI objectives that align with our broader access, participation and quality strategies. These objectives will guide institutional priorities, inform staff and student development and ensure accountability in the achievement of equitable outcomes.

Our initial EDI objectives include:

- **Widening Participation**: Increase enrolment from underrepresented backgrounds, including students from POLAR4 Q1 and Q2 postcodes, first-generation university attendees and international students from underserved regions. Our target is for a minimum of 30% of each intake to come from underrepresented groups by 2028.
- **Reducing Attainment Gaps**: Identify and reduce any differential academic outcomes based on ethnicity, disability, gender or socio-economic background. Our objective is to reduce any attainment gap exceeding 10% to below 5% within three academic years.

- **Increasing Staff Diversity**: Promote equitable recruitment practices to achieve greater representation of women, ethnic minorities and disabled staff in academic and senior leadership roles. Our target is for at least 25% of academic and leadership staff to be from underrepresented groups by 2029.

These objectives will be:

- Monitored annually via data dashboards and institutional reviews.
- Informed by analysis of admissions, progression, achievement and destination data.
- Reported to the Academic Board and reviewed with student and staff representation.
- Updated every three years, or sooner where emerging risks or sector developments require adjustment.

5. MONITORING, REVIEW AND REPORTING

Monitoring, evaluation and transparency are essential to ensuring our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) ambitions are not only stated but realised. At LIAS, we are committed to embedding a continuous improvement cycle where EDI performance is assessed regularly and findings are used to refine institutional strategy, policy and practice. This section outlines our approach to reviewing EDI progress, engaging students and staff in the process and publishing relevant data to promote transparency and accountability.

- LIAS is committed to transparency in its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. To promote accountability and engagement, we will publish an annual EDI Data and Impact Report. This will include:
  o Gender and ethnicity pay gap data (when applicable);
  o Demographic analysis of student applications, enrolments, attainment and progression;
  o Analysis of staff recruitment, retention and promotion trends by protected characteristic;
  o Progress updates on institutional EDI objectives.
- These reports will be made available to students, staff and stakeholders via the institutional website and discussed annually at the Academic Board and Student-Staff Liaison Committee.
- LIAS will establish a formal mechanism to involve students in the shaping and review of the EDI policy and related practices. This will include consultation through the Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) and the formation of a student-led EDI advisory group, which will meet termly and provide recommendations to the Director of Academic Quality and Student Experience.
- Feedback from students on inclusion and belonging will also be gathered through annual surveys, focus groups and programme evaluations and will directly inform institutional actions.
- Progress against EDI objectives will be monitored annually through institutional quality reviews and reported to the Academic Board.
- Student and staff voice will inform the review of this policy, ensuring it remains relevant and effective.
- The policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if required by changes in legislation or regulatory frameworks.