



Policies

Summary

Policies are key for communicating an organisation's commitment to equality and diversity. It is important that the policy acts as more than just a statement; that it realistically reflects what the organisation is capable of achieving and that it is regularly reviewed or updated to keep it relevant.

Many Science Council member bodies already have equality and diversity policies publicly available. The variation between them is broad, with some policies developed for specific diversity strands and others encompassing a general "equal opportunities" approach. The member body policies also widely differ in their detail: ranging from a sentence or two stating the importance of diversity to the organisation, to detailing what schemes will be involved and particular characteristics targeted.

Examples

Member Bodies

British Association of Sport and Exercise Science, Equal Opportunities Policy

BASES policy establishes its commitment to fair and equal treatment of those with any of the nine protected characteristics, and the responsibility of the Board to ensure this remains true. The policy is split into the following sections: statement, policy, implementation and review. These cover aspects of the society such as monitoring the committees (for sex, race and disability), ensuring equal access to events, representative nomination for awards and publication in journals, and use of neutral language in the association's media. The policy is reviewed every two years.

<http://www.bases.org.uk/write/documents/equal%20opps2November2010.pdf>

Geological Society of London, Equal Opportunities Policy

The policy consists of four key points of focus:

- i. Promoting an inclusive environment for all
- ii. Promoting equality of opportunity
- iii. Welcoming applications from fellowships across all backgrounds
- iv. Recruiting and promoting staff based on merit, rather than absence or presence of underrepresented characteristics.

It also outlines the consequences of not following the equality ethos, and the importance of treating all colleagues and visitors with dignity and respect.

<http://www.geolsoc.org.uk/About/Equal-Opportunities>

Institute of Mathematics and its Applications, Policy on Women in Mathematics

Primarily putting forth a positive action approach for supporting women in mathematics, this policy consists of five main points and public support of several of the London Mathematical Society's Women's initiatives. These

five points consist of monitoring gender balance on committees and working groups, looking to recognise those from non-standard career paths, ensuring women are nominated for prizes and awards, and including women speakers at events that are associated with the IMA.

http://www.ima.org.uk/activities/women_in_mathematics.cfm

Institution of Chemical Engineers, Equal Opportunities Policy

The policy addresses IChemE's commitment to equal opportunities for all members and stakeholders, of all backgrounds, encompassing all diversity streams. There are three main points mentioned in the policy, concerning the promotion of their equal opportunities approach, the decision to challenge discrimination and the commitment to monitor IChemE activities to ensure they are accessible and inclusive.

http://www.icheme.org/about_us/equal_opportunities.aspx

Institution of Environmental Sciences, Equality and Diversity Policy

The IES uses the policy to confirm its commitment to increasing diversity, and to creating an inclusive working environment. Particular attention is paid to recruitment, training, and member benefits being accessible to all. These practices, as well as the policy itself, are monitored to measure their impact.

http://www.ies-uk.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/equality_and_diversity_policy.pdf

Society of General Microbiology, Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

Four main points are set out in the SGM's policy:

- i. Creating an inclusive organisational culture and promoting all practices reflecting diversity
- ii. Gender equality will be fully embedded in the organisation first, and then other underrepresented groups will be focussed on. The working group will address this.
- iii. The SGM will play a greater role in supporting and developing careers of underrepresented groups, including increasing mentoring and outreach work.
- iv. The working group will provide recommendations to the council, and the Personal Development Committee will then take over the remit for monitoring and analysing diversity work.

<http://www.sgm.ac.uk/en/utilities/about-sgm/aims-objectives/equality-diversity.cfm>

Society of Biology, Women in Biology Statement

The society of biology's statement addresses the lack of women in senior bioscience positions compared to those taking bioscience degrees. It confers responsibility for tackling this to a senior society member, and will ensure that all committees and working groups have appropriate gender representation, with the same going for awards, events, speakers, etc. The society will also be aware of caring responsibilities and try to accommodate events around these. Finally, it commits to monitoring regulations and grants, and monitors all other aspects of the policy to affirm the society's dedication to achieving gender equality. There is also a short statement elsewhere on the website demonstrating their support for equality across all diversity characteristics.

<https://www.societyofbiology.org/policy/policy-issues/equality-diversity/women-in-biology>

Non-Member Bodies

The Geological Society of America, Diversity Position Statement

The GSA has a fairly extensive diversity statement on their website, outlining the business case for equal representation, their stance on it, and recommendations for achieving their aims. The society believes the most important element is mutual respect between all members, and that this should be integrated throughout all society activities. There are four main recommendations made in the statement: address current deficit in diversity understanding, commit to taking positive action to improve equality within the society, measure progress and define a benchmark, and disseminate the position on diversity throughout membership. There

are follow-up recommendations on how to achieve these aims, referencing what members themselves can do to help.

<http://www.geosociety.org/positions/position15.htm>

L'Oreal, Diversity Formal Policy

This policy focuses around 6 characteristics (nationality, ethnicity/culture, social, gender, disability, age) and 5 areas of action (recruitment/integration, training, career management, management/inclusion, communication). It aims to develop a management system that is aware and supportive of diversity and an inclusive environment with equal representation across traditionally minority groups. There is an aspiration to increase the employment of disabled people specifically. The company aims to recruit from a more diverse pool, disseminate its standing to its suppliers and related organisations, and monitor progress. Each action is covered in more detail within the policy document, including initiatives that are already underway.

<http://sustainabledevelopment09.loreal.com/talent/diversities-actions-report.pdf>

External Resources

ACAS

ACAS have published a guide on increasing diversity within businesses that explains how to improve or create an equality and diversity policy, with a sample statement to base it upon. It also elucidates how to monitor the policy and what actions to take thereafter.

http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/j/3/Delivering_Equality_and_diversity-accessible-version-July-2011.pdf

National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation

The NICEIC has a document explaining how to develop a diversity policy. Whilst this is aimed at contractors, it provides useful guidance on what to include, what to consider and sample policies to work from. Relevant information can be found from page 6 onwards.

<http://www.niceic.com/Uploads/File4302.pdf>

Opportunities for Collaboration

A basic STEM diversity policy could be developed in collaboration, taking best practice examples from members who already have policies in place and using group contributions to establish the basic requirements. Once this has been done, individual organisations can tailor it to be specific to their needs, as each policy will be unique to the approach the organisation will take and the way in which the member body is run.

Collaboration could also occur with organisations such as the RAEng, which has a fully developed diversity hub, or Science Council members with more experience in both creating and implementing a successful equality and diversity policy.

This document was written in January 2014. All links were live when accessed February 2015.