



Swiss International  
Institute Lausanne

## **EQUALITY POLICY**

**Swiss International Institute Lausanne - SIIL**

Approved by:	Academic Council
Date of Approval:	01.09.2020
Date of Next Review:	01.09.2025
Owner:	Academic Office
Contact:	t.zarubina@siil.ch

# EQUALITY POLICY

## Swiss International Institute Lausanne - SILL

### Table of contents

<b>I. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. SCOPE</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III. IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>4</b>
1. People with disabilities	4
2. Communications	5
3. Equality in Service Provision (Students, Staff and Service Users)	5
Students	5
Widening Participation	5
Accommodating Diversity	5
4. Equality in employment (employees)	6
Recruitment and Selection	6
Training and Development	7
Progression	7
5. Monitoring and Review, Feedback and Further Queries	7
Monitoring and review	7
Feedback	8
Further Information and queries	8
<b>IV. APPENDICES</b>	<b>8</b>
Appendix 1: Definitions	8

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Statement of Commitment

SIIL is committed to promoting equality in all aspects of its activity: employment, education and service provision.

SIIL is committed to non-discrimination for students, staff and service users.

SIIL seeks to identify any barriers to full participation in Institute life as a student, staff member or service user, and take action to redress these as appropriate.

SIIL takes positive action measures to support particular groups who may be disadvantaged or under-represented in accessing education, employment or career progression where appropriate.

SIIL strives to be inclusive of all in the SIIL community and seeks to accommodate diversity in service provision where practicable.

SIIL is fully committed to the ongoing implementation of these commitments.

There are 9 equality grounds where SIIL applies this policy:

- Gender
- Family status
- Civil status
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Disability
- Religion
- Ethnicity
- Membership of the Traveller community

The concept of equality is central to SIIL's ethos of academic and service excellence. SIIL is committed to recruiting and retaining the most talented students and staff, and to ensuring that its students and staff reach their full potential. The promotion of equality does not restrict academic debate or other forms of respectful free speech within the Institute – on the contrary, it welcomes a diversity of voices to the field, and encourages all to contribute to Institute's life.

## II. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All registered students and applicants for student places and relates to the provision of all services to students including teaching and supervision, assessment, progression, and award and support services.
- All applicants for student places and relates to all decisions in respect of the admission of students, progression (including promotion), pay, employment conditions and retention.
- All service users, visitors, customers and clients of the Institute, and relates to all services provided by SIIIL in its diverse activities both internal and external.

Note: hereafter 'service user' will be used to denote customers, members of the public, visitors and clients.

### **III. IMPLEMENTATION**

The Management is responsible for the governance and oversight of the affairs of SIIIL. The Academic Council is a Principal Body with staff and student representation, charged with responsibility for the development and monitoring of policies and practices in relation to equality. The Academic Council is responsible for reviewing the implementation of this policy and for any amendments to the policy.

Each Office that provides a service, including academic services, has the responsibility to ensure the service provided upholds the commitments outlined in this policy.

Deans, Study Programme Directors and Module leads, Line Managers, Supervisors and others in positions of authority should seek to ensure that the Equality Policy is upheld in their areas.

The Quality Control Manager will liaise with local areas regarding implementation of the Equality Policy (and other equality-related policies as appropriate) in the area.

All staff play a role in implementing this policy and are expected to familiarise themselves with its contents.

All students, student communities and service users are expected to cooperate with the implementation of this policy.

Non-compliance with this policy will be considered a breach of SIIIL governance, and may be referred to the Executive Secretary / Rectorate / Board, depending on the level of non-compliance.

#### **1. People with disabilities**

SIIIL seeks to ensure that students, staff and service users with a disability have as complete and equitable an access to all services and facets of Institute's life as can reasonably be provided.

SIIIL seeks to create an environment where students, staff and service users with disabilities can discuss what their needs are with all SIIIL areas. Institute areas will seek to make reasonable accommodations for those needs that are disclosed to them.

Students/incoming students may contact the Students Office department, in order to discuss their needs and to access relevant supports.

## **2. Communications**

### **Accessible Information**

Materials produced by SIIIL are provided in a relevant and accessible manner to students, staff and service users.

### **Advertising and Marketing**

Advertising and marketing strategies are non-discriminatory and communicate SIIIL's commitment to equality and diversity

## **3. Equality in Service Provision (Students, Staff and Service Users)**

### **Students**

The provisions of the Equality Policy apply to registered students of SIIIL, as well as to applicants to study at the Institute.

SIIIL ensures equality of access and opportunity for students and ensures its admissions process, assessment, administration and other procedures do not discriminate directly or indirectly against any student in relation to any of the nine equality grounds. This applies to extra-curricular as well as to academic elements of Institute's life. Student/alumni associations are expected to implement this policy throughout their activities.

### **Widening Participation**

SIIIL facilitates access to its programmes by students from under-represented groups through its outreach activities, its foundation courses and its alternative admissions routes. SIIIL works towards the objective for widening access to higher education as a part of its mission.

### **Accommodating Diversity**

SIIIL seeks to provide high-quality services in an inclusive, accessible, and flexible manner to the diversity of the student, staff and service user population.

SIIIL will seek to accommodate the diversity of students, staff, and service users from across the nine equality grounds and other under-represented groups by:

- Actively identifying and addressing student, staff and service user needs across the nine grounds and from other under-represented groups. Various data, feedback and consultation methods will be used for this purpose.

- Providing reasonable accommodation for students, staff and service users with disabilities and providing integrated access to services where practicable.
- Exploring barriers to participation for students, staff, and service users.
- Taking positive action measures to promote equality of opportunity for disadvantaged persons where necessary.
- Ensuring flexibility in the operation of systems and services.
- Embedding inclusiveness within all activities and academic practices.

#### 4. **Equality in employment (employees)**

The Equality Policy applies to all employees of SIIIL. Particular responsibility for the implementation of this section of the policy lies with the Human Resources Unit. All SIIIL employment practices and procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they comply with this policy.

##### **Recruitment and Selection**

In relation to recruitment and selection, SIIIL will:

- Seek to recruit from as wide a talent pool as possible and will proactively ensure that its recruitment activity is inclusive.
- Not discriminate directly or indirectly against any applicant or candidate to employment in relation to any of the nine equality grounds.
- Select candidates on the basis of merit – ensuring the candidate with the talent, skills, competencies and experience most suited to the post is selected.
- Identify and remove any unnecessary barriers that might impede the application or selection of an eligible candidate, across all nine equality grounds.
- Develop inclusive recruitment practices that acknowledge the diversity of applicants and candidates to the Institute.
- Provide a flexible service and facilitate communication between applicants and Recruitment staff.
- Seek information on the diversity profile of employment applicants to ensure that SIIIL is attracting a representative sample of people from different backgrounds.
- Seek feedback and consult with applicants or other interest groups to ensure quality of service.
- Ensure transparency of recruitment procedures.

##### **Advertising**

Ensure that job descriptions and advertisements do not directly or indirectly exclude any potential applicant or include any unnecessary requirements that would unfairly exclude an applicant in relation to any of the nine equality grounds.

Ensure that advertisements reach candidates across all nine equality grounds (by advertising in a variety of media for example).

## **Interviews**

Provide training in equality and diversity (as well as recruitment skills) to all members of interview panels.

Use an agreed and objective system of rating candidates (by experience, skill, qualifications etc. as relevant).

Assess any medical test required in relation to the specific duties of the job.

Employees who disclose a disability will be provided with reasonable accommodation.

## **Training and Development**

In relation to training and development, SIIIL will:

- Ensure that every employee has equal access to training and development opportunities regardless of any of the nine equality grounds.
- Seek to ensure that programmes provided are inclusive and accommodate the diversity of staff.
- Mainstream equality issues in training programmes where relevant.

## **Progression**

In relation to progression, SIIIL will:

- Ensure that all staff enjoy equal access to progression and promotional opportunities regardless of any of the nine equality grounds.
- Monitor promotional processes and outcomes regarding gender (and other equality criteria where appropriate) in order to ensure equality of opportunity in career progression in SIIIL.
- Remove any identified barriers to progression for particular groups of staff under the nine equality grounds, and where appropriate implement measures to redress imbalances.

## **5. Monitoring and Review, Feedback and Further Queries**

### **Monitoring and review**

The implementation of the policy will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Quality Assurance Office and the policy updated on foot of this review, other legal developments, or advice from government bodies, at least every three years.

SIIIL will continue to develop systems to collect and examine information relating to the diversity of the student, staff and service user body regarding the nine equality grounds and other under-represented groups in order to ensure service quality for all. Any such collection of data is conducted in compliance with SIIIL's obligations under Data Protection legislation.

The Quality Assurance Office has a particular role in overseeing the development and embedding of equality monitoring processes.

Each service, administrative and academic area will include a report on the implementation of this policy in their Annual Report and will facilitate the Quality Assurance Office with the relevant information in order to monitor implementation.

The Quality Assurance Office will report on the overall implementation of this policy in its Annual Report.

### **Feedback**

SIIL will actively seek feedback on the implementation of this policy from students, staff, and service users. This feedback will inform future development and implementation of the policy.

SIIL welcomes feedback from students, staff, and service users from across the nine equality grounds.

SIIL has developed quality enhancement systems to collect feedback on academic programmes from students. Regular consultation with student and staff representatives occurs via the SIIL feedback forms.

### **Further Information and queries**

Specific queries on this policy or requests should be directed to the Quality Assurance Office (email: [a.isanina@siil.ch](mailto:a.isanina@siil.ch)), who will progress as appropriate.

## **IV. APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1: Definitions**

These definitions are guidelines only and should not be taken as legal advice.

#### **Discrimination**

Discrimination is prohibited. Discrimination can be direct, indirect, by association or imputation.

**Direct discrimination:** direct discrimination is defined as the treatment of a person in a less favorable way than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on any of the nine equality grounds.

**Indirect discrimination:** indirect discrimination happens when there is less favorable treatment in effect or by impact. It happens when people are, for example, refused

employment or training not explicitly on account of a discriminatory reason but because of a provision, practice or requirement which they find hard to satisfy. If the provision, practice, or requirement puts people who belong to one of the grounds at a particular disadvantage, then the employer will have indirectly discriminated, unless the provision is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.

### **Discrimination by association**

Discrimination by association happens where a person associated with another person (belonging to the nine equality grounds) is treated less favorably because of that association.

### **Discrimination by imputation**

Discrimination by imputation occurs when a person is discriminated against on the basis of any of the nine equality grounds which is imputed to them (i.e. they are thought to fit into that ground).

#### a). Equality Grounds

**gender:** a person's identity as a man, woman or non-binary gender identity. Discrimination relating to a person being transgender or having intersex status is covered by this ground.

**civil status:** single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, civil partner, former civil partner.

**family status:** pregnant, a parent of a person under 18 years, or parent of a person with a disability;

**age:** this only applies to people over 16;

**race and ethnicity:** a particular race, skin color, nationality or ethnic origin;

**religion:** different religious belief, background, outlook or none;

**disability:** this is broadly defined including people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions.

**sexual orientation:** a person's preference in sexual partners, which may include but is not limited to such categories as gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual or asexual;

**membership of the Traveller community:** people who are commonly called Travellers, who are identified both by Travellers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

In both cases the unwanted conduct may include acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

The emphasis is on the effect of the unwanted conduct on the recipient, not on the intention of the perpetrator.

### **Prejudice**

Prejudice is a negative judgment, conviction or opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge or examination of the facts. It may be directed towards a group or an individual of that group.

### **Reasonable Accommodation of People with Disabilities**

A person selling goods or providing services, a person providing accommodation, educational institutions and clubs must do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of a person with a disability.

This involves providing special treatment or facilities in circumstances where without these, it would be impossible or unduly difficult to avail of the goods, services, accommodation etc.

However, they are not obliged to provide special facilities or treatment when this costs more than what is called a nominal cost. What amounts to nominal cost will depend on the circumstances such as the size and resources of the body involved.

Nothing according to the legislation requires an employer to recruit or promote a person who is not fully competent and fully available and capable of undertaking the duties attached to the position. A person who has a disability is considered fully competent and capable on reasonable accommodation (referred to as appropriate measures) being provided by the person's employer.

An employer is obliged to take appropriate measures to enable a person who has a disability:

- to have access to employment
- to participate or advance in employment
- to undertake training
- unless the measures would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer.

Appropriate measures are practical measures to adapt the employer's place of business including:

- the adaptation of premises and equipment,
- patterns of working time
- distribution of tasks
- or the provision of training or integration resources.

The employer is not obliged to provide any treatment, facility or thing that the person might ordinarily or reasonably provide for himself or herself.

In determining whether the measures would impose a disproportionate burden, account is taken of the financial and other costs entailed, the scale and financial resources of the employer's business, and the possibility of obtaining public funding or other assistance.

### **Stereotyping**

Stereotyping is when characteristics conventionally associated with a particular group are applied to the individuals perceived to be of that group. Stereotypes are generalisations, they may be ill-informed, and they can be either positive or negative.

### **Vicarious Liability**

Employers are liable for discriminatory acts of an employee in the course of his or her employment, unless they can prove that they took reasonably practicable steps to prevent the conduct.

Approved by:	Academic Council
Date of Approval:	01.09.2020
Date of Next Review:	01.09.2025
Owner:	Academic Office
Contact:	t.zarubina@siil.ch