

## **CODE OF PRACTICE - DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY**

The Political Studies Association, recognising the value of sustaining an inclusive decision-making environment in which all members are able to contribute, strives to treat all members on the basis of merit and ability alone.

The PSA aims to be an Equal Opportunities Employer and is concerned to highlight and support appropriate professional working practice amongst its members.

Members should not act in ways which unfairly discriminate against students, colleagues or job applicants on the ground of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, colour, ethnicity or nationality, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- 1) The PSA affirms its commitment to the equal treatment of all people.
- 2) As an employer the PSA does not discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, colour, ethnicity or nationality, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. The PSA is firmly opposed to any form of discrimination, which can be shown to be either directly or indirectly based on these human attributes and values.
- 3) The PSA, as an employer, operates an equal opportunities policy in the recruitment, selection, appraisal, training and promotion of staff at all levels. Selection criteria and procedures are monitored and reviewed to ensure that individuals are recruited and selected on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities by ways that can be shown are not directly or indirectly discriminatory. All employees will be afforded the opportunity to undertake training appropriate to their present posts and future aspirations.
- 4) The PSA will take all appropriate disciplinary or legal action to protect PSA employees from any discriminatory behaviour, verbal or physical, by any other PSA employee. Any PSA member who behaves inappropriately towards a member of PSA staff may be asked to leave the organisation.
- 5) Members should act in ways which ensure equal opportunities for all students, colleagues or job applicants irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, colour, ethnicity or nationality, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 6) Members are asked to take care to ensure that direct or indirect discrimination does not take place at any stage in any selection procedure - advertising, response to preliminary enquiries, shortlisting, interviewing - or in the requirement of formal qualifications which are not wholly necessary.
- 7) Care should be taken that the element of preferment frequently present in the appointment of part-time/hourly paid teachers does not amount to indirect discrimination.
- 8) Harassment is an abuse of power which negates both the principles of equal opportunities and the possibilities of a good working environment. Harassment, in general terms, may be defined as unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women. It may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religion, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident. The key is that the actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient. Members thus have a duty to refrain from them and to actively oppose such behaviour by others.

- 9) Members should ensure that their behaviour towards colleagues contributes to a positive working environment. When acting as managers and as employers, members have a duty to implement fair employment practices and promote equal opportunities in relation to appointments, research opportunities, appraisal and promotion as well as disciplinary procedures.
- 10) Members have a duty to minimise discriminatory practices by students which might detract from equality of educational opportunity; this applies particularly to racial and sexual harassment, including verbal abuse. They have a duty to be cognisant with the disciplinary codes existing in their institutions for dealing with students who insult or intimidate others, including their teachers and supervisors.

*(Approved by the Executive Committee of the PSA, Edinburgh, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013. This incorporates, elaborates and replaces the reference to equal opportunities in the Association's **Guidelines for Good Professional Conduct.**)*