



1. Introduction

- 1.1. Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) is committed to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion across all its work as an employer, tertiary education and research institution, and service provider. We recognise that the promotion of equality and diversity is fundamental to good governance and management practices, and that this principle will support us to our strategic priorities and outcomes.
- 1.2. SRUC works hard to promote inclusive working and learning environments, and to deliver inclusive services which are free from discrimination and where our employees, students, and anyone associated with SRUC (e.g. visitors, contractors, and suppliers) are treated fairly.
- 1.3. SRUC requires all members of the SRUC community to treat each other with respect, dignity and consideration at all times, in keeping with the principles and spirit of this policy and SRUC's [shared values](#).
- 1.4. This policy outlines the main ways SRUC will realise and monitor our ambitions to improve diversity, enable inclusion and promote equality so that our community will realise their full potential regardless of their background.
- 1.5. SRUC promotes awareness of this policy across the institution through appropriate communication channels and through relevant information or training to support staff and students to understand their rights and responsibilities with regards to equality, diversity, and inclusion
- 1.6. SRUC works in partnership with the SRUC Student's Association and Trade

3.1. SRUC is committed to compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in the [Equality Act 2010](#), which requires us to pay due regard to the need to:

eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation, and harassment.

advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not

3.2. As a listed public authority in Scotland, SRUC is supported to meet the public sector equality duty through compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (Scotland) (Specific Duties) Regulations 2012 (and subsequent updates).

3.3. In respect of the protected characteristics (see paragraph 2.2), SRUC does not tolerate and works to prevent and eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation as defined under the Equality Act 2010. Appendix A provides a summary of the forms of discrimination prohibited under this policy and which are unlawful.

3.4. You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass people including current and former employees, job applicants, students, customers, contractors, suppliers, and visitors. This applies:

in the workplace or learning environments (whether at home or in the office/ on campus)

Please refer to the [Equality Act 2010](#) for more information about forms of discrimination and the relevant protected characteristics.

Direct discrimination : treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.

Indirect discrimination : occurs when someone is treated less favourably because they associate with someone else who has a protected characteristic.

Perceived discrimination : occurs where someone is thought to have a protected characteristic. It applies even if the individual does not have that characteristic. For example, a student is subjected to homophobic comments because of their style of dress or choice of course.

Discriminatory provision, criterion or practice : a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.

Harassment : this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

Retaliation : treating someone unfavourably because they have taken some form of action relating to the Equality Act e.g. complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

: this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.