

EACD Equality and Diversity Policy

The European Academy of Childhood Disability (EACD) is dedicated to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture amongst the whole organisation. We are committed to promote diversity and eliminate discrimination in the organisation.

Our aim is to ensure that all (sub-)committee members, employees and applicants for any position within our organisation are given equal opportunity and that our organisation is representative of all sections of society. Each employee will be respected and valued and able to give their best as a result.

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing equality and fairness to all in our employment and not provide less favourable facilities or treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, or sex and sexual orientation. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All (sub-)committee member and/or employees, no matter whether they are part-time, full-time, temporary, or on voluntary basis, will be treated fairly and with respect. When selecting candidates for (sub-)committee membership, employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit, it will be on the basis of their aptitude and ability.

All (sub-)committee members and employees will be given help and encouragement to develop their full potential and utilise their unique talents. Therefore, the skills and resources of our organisation will be fully utilised and we will maximise the efficiency of our whole organisation.

EACD Commitments:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all team members are recognised and valued.
- To create a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for every (sub-)committee member and employee.
- To not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and to discipline those that breach this policy.
- To make development and progression opportunities available to all committee members and employees.
- To promote equality in the workplace, which EACD believes is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- To promote equality and diversity in research and clinical practice across Europe and beyond.
- To encourage anyone who feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns and receive fair treatment a just approach and opportunity for appropriate redress
- To encourage all our members and employees to treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- To regularly review all our nomination and employment practices and procedures so that fairness is maintained at all times.

EACD has zero tolerance against any type discrimination and/or harassment. EACD also recognises that creating a supportive and inclusive culture amongst the whole organisation is everyone's responsibility, and that it has an obligation to put in place reasonable measures to ensure all within our organisation are given equal opportunity and that our organisation is representative of all sections of society.

EACD will inform all its (sub-)committee members and employees that an equality and diversity policy is in operation and that they are obligated to comply with its requirements and

promote fairness in the workplace. The policy will also be drawn to the attention of stakeholders, partners, members, customers, learners, and job applicants.

The EACD Equality and Diversity Policy is fully supported by the General Management Committee. Our policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Ethics and Compliance Committee to ensure that equality and diversity is continually promoted in the entire organisation.

Procedures for dealing with equality and diversity complaints

EACD is committed to maintaining an supportive and inclusive environment within the organisation that is free from discrimination and harassment.

'Discrimination' is where a person is treated less favourably because of their sex, age, marital status, pregnancy, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, political or religious conviction, impairment, family responsibility or family status. Discrimination may be direct, indirect or systemic.

'Harassment' for the purposes of these procedures is defined as any unwelcome, offensive, belittling or abusive comment or action regarding a persons' sex, age, marital status, pregnancy, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, political or religious conviction, impairment, family responsibility or family status. It is behaviour towards another person which is unwanted and which adversely affects the work or study environment.

Policy and procedures for resolving complaints of discrimination and harassment have been adopted by EACD to:

- promote a work and study environment which is inclusive and characterized by respect and which is free from discrimination and harassment
- provide an internal procedure for dealing with issues and complaints of discrimination and harassment which may arise
- ensure that discrimination and harassment are dealt with in as confidential, sensitive and expedient a manner as possible
- ensure that the prevention and resolution of complaints of discrimination and harassment become an integral part of line management and supervisory responsibilities.

The aims of these procedures for dealing with equality and diversity complaints are to:

- Ensure that accurate information regarding equality and diversity issues is readily available.
- Provide information and support to any person who has been or alleges that they have been discriminated against or harassed
- Ensure the rights of respondents are protected
- Take reasonable steps to ensure there is no recurrence of the behaviour or practice which gave rise to a justifiable complaint
- Ensure there are no reprisals against the complainant or witnesses for making or participating in a justifiable complaint
- Ensure the situation giving rise to a complaint is addressed as far as possible to the complainant's satisfaction in a just and fair manner
- Gain information on the extent of a problem to enable the Academy to take preventative steps against discrimination and harassment
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with expediently, in the interests of all concerned. Undue delay may provide grounds for further complaint.

Internal procedures for dealing with complaints

Any person who feels that they have been discriminated against or harassed may:

- Choose to discuss the problem with the respondent (i.e. the person or entity against whom a complaint of harassment or discrimination has been made.) in an attempt to resolve the matter in a constructive manner.
- Choose to resolve the complaint through the Organisation's internal procedures.

Four stages in the internal procedures:

Stage 1 - Complaint resolution by relevant supervisor

The aim of this option is for a resolution of the complaint to be achieved in a just, prompt and confidential manner. Staff or Committee members in supervisory roles have a responsibility to deal with discrimination and harassment as part of their role in maintaining a productive environment in which to work or study, and through promoting proper standards of conduct.

They have a responsibility to:

- ensure that all are aware of appropriate and acceptable standards of behaviour
- make known the EACD's policies, and names and locations of the Ethics and Compliance Committee Members
- take early corrective action to deal with behaviour which may constitute discrimination or harassment
- monitor the workplace and study environment so they become aware of any discrimination or harassment that may be likely to arise

If the complainant does not wish to resolve the situation directly with the respondent, the matter can be taken to the respondent's supervisor. For the purpose of this process the supervisor shall be the person nearest to the respondent in terms of line responsibility.

For example:

RESPONDENT	SUPERVISOR
Member of EACD	EACD Secretary
Staff member	Senior Staff member <i>or</i> EACD Secretary
Sub-committee member	Chair of sub-committee
General Management Committee member	Chair of EACD

Care should be taken by the supervisor not to pre-judge either party or to dismiss a matter as trivial. The supervisor may utilise a range of strategies in resolving the complaint whilst ensuring that principles of procedural fairness are observed, such as:

- provide sufficient opportunity for the complainant to present their case
- inform the respondent of the substance of the allegations and provide adequate opportunity to respond
- give reasonable notice to all parties of any interviews or meetings regarding the complaint
- discuss the complaint through separate interviews with the complainant and respondent, or through a joint meeting with both parties if they agree
- provide mediation to resolve the complaint, if appropriate

At any Stage of this process, the supervisor may seek advice and assistance from the Ethics and Compliance Committee with respect to the procedures and proposed strategies. The complainant, respondent or supervisor may request an Ethics and Compliance Committee Member to attend any meetings to provide advice and ensure fair process is followed. The Ethics and Compliance Committee Member's role does not extend to acting as an advocate for either the complainant or respondent. The supervisor or Ethics and Compliance Committee Member may request the assistance of other Ethics and Compliance Committee members. If

there is a legitimate complaint, and the matter is resolved, the supervisor will follow up with the complainant to ensure that there have been no further incidents.

If the respondent to the complaint is the immediate supervisor Stage 1 would be omitted. In this case, or if the complaint has not been resolved, the complainant or respondent may refer the complaint to the EACD Ethics and Compliance Committee, as set out below.

Stage 2 - Complaint resolution by Ethics and Compliance Committee

Initial enquiries about equality matters of concern, including possible cases of discrimination or harassment, should be made to any of the Ethics and Compliance Committee Members. An Ethics and Compliance Committee Member who feels unable or unwilling to deal with a particular enquiry should refer the complainant to the Chair of the Ethics and Compliance Committee.

The role of an Ethics and Compliance Committee Member is to:

- be a first point of contact for (committee) members or staff who wish to make inquiries, who have a discrimination or harassment complaint, or who want simply to sound out a concern
- listen with respect and empathy, at all times ensuring confidentiality
- assist the person to clarify the situation and their feelings; recognising that talking about the situation may suffice and the person may then feel able to deal with the situation
- identify the nature of the complaint and advise about both internal and external ways of dealing with complaints
- provide advice on EACD policy and procedures and the possible stages involved
- inform the complainant about their rights, as well as the rights of the respondent; discuss note taking and recording of the complaint and provide advice on this to the complainant
- caution the complainant to be careful regarding who to inform of the matter given the possible risk of defamation and aggravation of the problem
- if appropriate and necessary, accompany the complainant to preliminary meetings associated with the matter;
- refer the complainant to the relevant supervisor if the person wishes
- advise the complainant that the complaint may be withdrawn at any stage without prejudice

All approaches to an Ethics and Compliance Committee Member will be treated in confidence and Ethics and Compliance Committee Members will not discuss a case with a third person without the knowledge and consent of the complainant or inquirer, other than in accordance with these procedures.

If the respondent to the complaint is the Ethics and Compliance Committee Stage 2 would be omitted. In this case, or if the complaint has not been resolved, the complainant or respondent may refer the complaint to the EACD General Management Committee. This referral to the General Management Committee should occur only after initial discussion of available options with the relevant supervisor and/or Ethics and Compliance Committee.

Stage 3 - Complaint resolution by EACD General Management Committee

Where mediation and resolution of the complaint has been unsuccessful in Stages one and two, the complainant will be referred to the EACD General Management Committee. Referral may be made by the complainant or respondent or their representatives (such as a Supervisor or Ethics and Compliance Committee) only after following Stage 1 and/or Stage 2. The EACD General Management Committee will investigate complaints in accordance with the procedures outlined in Stage two.

If the complaint is found to be substantiated, the EACD General Management Committee will undertake appropriate action or refer the matter to the Annual General Meeting. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved the matter is referred to the Annual General Meeting.

Stage 4 - Formal complaint to the Annual General Meeting

When the previous Stages have failed, a formal complaint or formal referral is made to the Annual General Meeting, who may constitute a Review Panel comprising the Chair of the Ethics and Compliance Committee, and one or more nominees of the Annual General Meeting if deemed necessary. The Review Panel will report its findings and recommendations to the Annual General Meeting who will determine appropriate action. The Annual General Meeting's determination will be final.

Note: It is anticipated that the majority of complaints will be resolved in Stages 1 or 2. Stage 1 is not appropriate where a complaint is against a supervisor.

Note: Any complaint of victimisation will be treated in the same manner as a complaint of discrimination or harassment. 'Victimisation' includes any unfavourable treatment of a person who has been involved with a discrimination or harassment enquiry or complaint. Unfavourable treatment could include adverse changes in the working environment, denial of training, denial of promotion, and exclusion by peers.

Note: If the complaint is found to be vexatious, disciplinary procedures may be taken against the complainant.