

## **SAE Institute General Policy**

### **G03 Equal Opportunity, Disability and Inclusion Policy**

#### **1. Policy Statement**

SAE Institute embraces the concept and beliefs of equal opportunity for all students and staff, and strives to ensure that its decision-making processes reflect a commitment to access and equity and that all students or prospective students and staff are treated fairly irrespective of ethnicity, gender, beliefs or disability.

SAE Institute acknowledges that this is dependent on non-discriminatory access to services and comparable education and training outcomes by all groups in society. By providing accessible and equitable educational programs, employment and services, SAE Institute students and staff will be able to develop knowledge and skills to enhance life and work opportunities.

#### **2. Purpose**

To ensure effective guidelines for providing opportunities for all people, regardless of their individual or social background. SAE Institute supports government policy initiatives and provides access opportunities whenever possible or alternatively seeks assistance for participants from the relevant agency or department.

#### **3. Scope**

This policy applies in the context of SAE Institute operations in Europe and Licences operations, and is applicable to all staff employed with SAE Institute, and all students enrolled with, or intending to enrol with SAE Institute.

#### **4. Associated Policies and Documents**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- G01 Code of Conduct
- G04 Student Engagement Policy
- A07 Academic Grievance Policy
- G06 Non-Academic Grievance Policy

#### **5. Definitions**

**Equal opportunity** refers to the attitudes, policies, guidelines and practices that ensure all students and staff are treated fairly and that SAE Institute educational programs are responsive to the diverse needs of all clients.

#### **6. Policy**

SAE Institute delivers nationally accredited or validated education and training programs and in doing so accepts its responsibility to deliver these in a fair and equitable manner, to

proactively promote equality, and to identify and address any perceived or actual barriers for all students and staff to fully participate in and contribute to the work of SAE Institute.

SAE shall ensure:

- That all students are made aware of this position during orientation, and all staff are made aware during their induction;
- Incorporation of non-discriminatory student and employee selection processes that encourage access for all;
- That access and equity principles are considered when developing new products, policies, practices, systems and procedures;
- That if required, appropriate counselling and training may be provided to employees who are required to provide services to under-represented groups;
- That Institute policies and procedures which support the principles of access and equity are in place and actively implemented;
- That an ongoing commitment is maintained to identify, address and eliminate access and equity barriers which may be encountered within the organisation's processes, practices and business decisions;
- Appropriate liaison with disability support groups to ensure that special needs can be catered for in areas where SAE Institute may have no knowledge or relevant experience;
- The provision of appropriate support e.g. with tutorial assistance, for any student who is encountering learning difficulties;
- Regular review of SAE access and equity policy and procedures to ensure they:
  - Meet legislative requirements
  - Address individual student needs
  - Enable participant learning outcomes to be met
  - Address relevant community needs;
  - Address any relevant circumstances which have been identified and not previously covered in the respective policies or procedures.

## **7. Legislative Obligations**

This policy acknowledges the legal obligations of SAE Institute and all staff and students of SAE Institute in relation to Equal Opportunity under relevant legislation, to ensure that the Institute's learning, teaching and assessment practices are fair and equitable, and that the working and learning environments are non-discriminatory.

**The relevant legislation** that staff and students should be familiar with includes but is not limited to:

- Equality Act (2010)
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act (RRAA) 2000
- The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Equal Pay Act (EPA) 1970
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation Regulations) 2007
- Civil Partnership Act 2004.

## **8. Making Contact**

Students who have concerns in relation to any of the matters relating to this policy should in the first instance make contact with their Campus Academic Coordinator, who will ensure fair, appropriate and timely consideration of any such matter, and shall be advised by the Group Academic Coordinator and the relevant Campus Manager.

Alternatively or if not satisfied, students may pursue the formal provisions of the Student Grievance Policies (A07 and G06).

Staff who have concerns in relation to any of the matters relating to this policy should in the first instance make contact with their line-manager or the Campus Manager, who will ensure fair, appropriate and timely consideration of any such matter.

If not satisfied with the outcomes of that process, staff may make contact with or write formally to the CEO of SAE Institute detailing the nature of their concerns. The CEO may initiate appropriate action or may delegate the matter for resolution to a senior member of SAE staff who has had no previous involvement in the matter of concern.

## **9. Student Disability Policy**

The Disability Discrimination Act (2005, Part 4) makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled individuals in a learning environment. SAE Institute understands the importance of taking into account individual needs, and to work with students to find appropriate measures to support them throughout their time with SAE Institute.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines disability as "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

### **9.1. Definition of 'Disability'**

For the purposes of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Disability in this context can include a wide range of issues and conditions. Typically this could be one, or combination of, the following categories:

- Physical and sensory impairments
- Specifically recognised learning difficulties
- Autistic spectrum disorders
- Documented mental health issues
- Severe disfigurements
- Anyone with an HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis
- Progressive documented conditions that affect normal day-to-day activities, including long term physical health issues.

The above list should not be seen as exhaustive.

If you feel that you do have a condition that could affect your ability to study effectively, you should contact the College Administration as soon as possible.

### **9.2. Disability Services**

Due to the smaller size and specialised technical facilities of SAE Institute campuses, there is normally no dedicated on-campus disability service offered. The Campus Academic Coordinator together with the Campus Manager will be able to advice on potential support strategies on a case-by-case basis.

Each SAE Campus is continually improving its facilities to ensure equal opportunities and accessibility for all students with both physical and cognitive disabilities. Please discuss with the Campus Academic Coordinator the type of support you normally need in learning, teaching and assessment environments, prior to commencement of any programme.

Support includes, but is not restricted to, feasible and reasonable special arrangements for examinations, liaison with tutors, and support for students provided through the Disabled Students Allowance.

### **9.3. Financial Services**

Students will be advised on how they may contact their local authority directly for Disabled Students' Allowance (please also see Appendix A, section 6). SAE Institute will also support students with any evidence that may be required to confirm enrolment and the nature of the programme.

### **9.4. Admission Process**

SAE welcomes applications from people with disabilities and offers places solely on the basis of academic ability. We invite applicants with a disability to visit your preferred or local SAE Campus to evaluate our facilities and to talk in confidence with our staff. This way, applicants can assess for themselves the support available before deciding whether or not to apply or to accept an offer to study at that campus of SAE Institute. Please contact and inform the campus you wish to visit in order to ensure the appropriate staff members are available to make you welcome and to assist.

### **Disclosure of Disability**

At the time of application, students considering applying to programmes at SAE Institute are strongly advised to ensure full disclosure of any physical or mental conditions which may impact on their ability to undertake a specified course of study and to advise what support may be required to enable them to complete their preferred study path. This helps SAE Institute to make a thorough assessment and to make any reasonable adjustments prior to course commencement.

No applicant will be refused a place at SAE Institute on the grounds of disability if full disclosure has been made before an opportunity has been provided for a full consideration of the support required and the related programme. SAE Institute may, exceptionally, reject an application on the grounds of disability if there are reasonable grounds to believe the student will not be able to complete the various academic, technical or professional requirements for the course.

You are advised to do this even if you do not believe that additional support is required. Your information helps us to monitor the success of our equal opportunities policies and enables each SAE Institute Campus to keep students informed of developments that may be of benefit or interest.

The Academic and Administration team can discuss your needs and advise on action. Queries can often be resolved over the telephone or by letter, although personal visits are often the best way of assessing needs, facilities and the environment.

### **9.5. Mobility Access**

Students considering applying to programmes at SAE Institute with mobility concerns are strongly advised to inquire about any support that may be required at the time of application and prior to being admitted on the course. Awareness of need in advance of requirements will enable SAE Institute to best serve the needs of the student, and to take into consideration and make any reasonable adjustments prior to course commencement. This may also be taken into consideration for emergency evacuation procedures.

Over the last few years considerable changes have been made to the physical environment of each SAE Campus. New buildings are based on architectural good practice and aim to provide facilitated accessibility for wheelchairs. However, some campuses are in older or heritage buildings, and accessibility does vary across campuses.

SAE is committed to a continuing programme of improving accessibility and incorporating provision for wheelchair users, and we welcome your advice and suggestions for improvement.

Please contact your SAE Campus of choice for any questions related to disabilities.

### **9.6. Acquired Disability**

If a student becomes disabled while being a student at SAE Institute, or suspects there is a need for investigation, the student must notify the Campus Academic Coordinator immediately so that appropriate consideration can be made and where needed, appropriate support can be provided.

### **9.7. Learning and Teaching Arrangements**

SAE Institutes will operate systems to monitor the effectiveness of provision for disabled students, evaluate progress and identify opportunities for enhancement.

The relevant Campus Academic Coordinator will liaise with the academic staff members as necessary where special support is required. Special provision may include but need not be limited to:

- Providing learning resources in advance
- Providing learning resources in alternative formats
- Incorporating inclusive learning strategies
- Scheduling classes in rooms that are appropriate for your needs
- Alerting your tutors to your needs in terms of teaching and learning materials
- Permitting necessary breaks
- Permitting the use of assistive technology for the purpose of learning activities
- Permitting the assistance of an independent disability support worker, e.g. Sign interpreter, reader, note taker, or mobility support assistant.

### **Learning Disabilities**

SAE supports the efforts of students with Specific Learning Difficulties (dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD). Support may include but need not be limited to:

- Special arrangements for examinations
- Use of a spell checker at exams
- Allowance for typing instead of writing
- Allowance for spelling
- Provision of documents in adjusted formats
- Reading material may be provided in advance

- Printed copies may be provided on coloured paper
- Permitting an independent support worker for reading or writing
- Giving agreed extra time consistently for all timed assessment tasks.

These arrangements will be made under the guidance of and with the approval of the Campus Academic Coordinator. Every effort will be made to provide disabled students access to the full range of student services that are provided by the institution.

### **9.8. Assessment Arrangements**

The Campus Academic Coordinator will liaise with the academic staff members as necessary where special support is required. Special provision may include but need not be limited to:

- Providing assessment in alternative format
- Providing additional time to complete assessed work
- Permitting the use of assistive technology for the purpose of assessment
- Permitting the assistance of an independent disability support worker, e.g. Sign interpreter, reader, or mobility support assistant.

Special and flexible assessment arrangements are permitted on the recommendation of the Programme Coordinator or Campus Academic Coordinator, following discussion with the student and the submission of appropriate medical evidence; for example in the case of dyslexia, the official disability assessment report. Arrangements may include provision of additional time to complete required learning assessments such as assignments and examinations, and additional facilities such as appropriate seating. Unless specifically excluded by examining professional bodies external to SAE Institute, and on appropriate recommendation, amanuenses (someone employed to write for you) may be permitted.

These arrangements will be made under the guidance of and with the approval of the Campus Academic Coordinator.

### **9.9. Confidentiality**

Wherever local regulations permit, information is collected by the campuses on disclosure of impairments and is used appropriately to monitor the applications, admissions and academic progress of disabled students. Any information relating to a Disability will be kept confidential and disclosure will occur only:

- with the explicit consent of the individual
- when it helps to facilitate the student's learning experience
- if it is required within the provisions of the law
- for monitoring Equal Opportunity management.

### **9.10. Awareness**

Institutions enable staff to participate in a range of continuing professional development activities in order to enhance their knowledge, reflect upon and develop their practice, and contribute towards a fully inclusive institutional culture.

The institution's publicity, programme details and general information are accessible and include explanations of how the entitlements of disabled students are met.

### **10. Policy History**

*Sept 2010: Policy revised and approved (CEO)*

*Oct 2011: Policy revisions approved (CEO)*

*Feb 2012: Policy revisions approved (CEO)*

*Feb 2013: Policy to be reviewed.*