



This document shows the commitment of SBCS GLI to equal opportunity and diversity within the workplace.

# Equal Opportunity Policy

*Version: 3.1 – March 01, 2023*

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## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Revision Table	Executive Director – Dr. Robin Maraj
<b>Issue Date:</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> July, 2013
<b>Review #1:</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> July, 2014: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed; no changes made</li> </ul>
<b>Review #2:</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> January, 2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page 4, paragraph 2 “add real value”</li> </ul>
<b>Review #3:</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> February, 2016: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed; no changes made.</li> </ul>
<b>Review #4:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> February, 2017: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page 3 – paragraph 3 – ‘innovative, ethical’ – reposition.</li> <li>• Page 3 – paragraph 3 – ‘enrich their communities’</li> <li>• Page 3 – paragraph 6 – removed line: ‘SBCS also ensures that students and staff alike feel respected and able to give their best.’</li> <li>• Page 3 – reorder: age, race, gender, nationality, ethnic or national origin, marital status, socio-economic background, political beliefs, pregnancy or marital status and disability.</li> <li>• Page 3 – added ‘sexual orientation, HIV-Aids status’</li> <li>• Page 4 – moved paragraph 5 under paragraph 3</li> <li>• Page 4 – inserted word “excerpt”</li> <li>• Page 5 – added age, race, gender, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, socio – economic background, political beliefs, pregnancy or maternity status, HIV/ Aids status or disability.</li> <li>• Page 5 – removed and reworded: Training opportunities will be based upon a member of staff’s ability, business needs, and the availability of appropriate work related courses. Wherever practical training will be arranged so that all categories of staff may attend. (HR Policy and Procedures Manual, 2012 p. 18) SBCS encourages employees to improve their technical and intellectual competence by providing training both on and off the job and by pursuing and successfully completing appropriate courses of study. The organisation will assist in arranging courses that are of appropriate technical and intellectual content which will improve the employee’s competence. SBCS endeavours to provide a work environment that is conducive to individual growth and self-development Page 40 HR Manual 2016.</li> </ul>

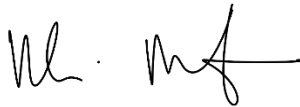
## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Page 6 – Paragraph two, point 3 – updated – HR Manual 2016 – Page 18</li> <li>Page 6 – Paragraph two, point 3 – updated – HR Manual 2016 – Page 13</li> <li>Page 6 – Training and Development – reworded first point – reference to page 40 of the HR manual</li> <li>Page 6 – Changed positioning of SBCS Club; Added HR and HRSC monthly staff initiatives.</li> <li>Page 7 – First paragraph – HR Manual 2016 page 24; Staff Code of Ethics and Business Conduct page 15 &amp; 16</li> <li>Page 7 – Discipline and Grievances, point 3 – change from page 22 to page 21</li> <li>Page 7 – Discipline and Grievances, Point 4 – HR Manual 2016 details our process on discriminatory behavior – Pages 44:47: 48-51</li> <li>Page 7 – Communication – remove the word ‘wherever’</li> </ul>
<b>Review #5:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> February, 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed; no changes made.</li> </ul>
<b>Review #6:</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> February, 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed; no changes made.</li> </ul>
<b>Review #7:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> February, 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed; no changes made.</li> </ul>
<b>Review #8:</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> February, 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cover Page – updated company logo and name</li> <li>Page 4 – paragraph 6: amended “School of Business and Computer Science” to “SBCS Global Learning Institute”</li> </ul>
<b>Review #9:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> February, 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amended references to HR Policies &amp; Procedures Handbook.</li> </ul>
<b>Review #10:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> March, 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included “religion” in Policy Statement</li> </ul>

Approved by:

Dr Robin Maraj  
Executive Director

Approver’s signature:



Date Approved:

March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

**Equal Opportunity Policy**

Issue Date: 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2013

Last revised: 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2023

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### A CORPORATE STATEMENTS

- A 1.1** Our Vision is to be to be the region's premier tertiary teaching and learning institute for globally recognized and industry-relevant education and training.
- A 1.2** Our Mission Statement: to deliver industry- relevant tertiary education and training, using a student centric approach, with staff, facilities and courseware of the highest quality, leading to the transformation of our human resource into the region's most valuable natural resource.
- A 1.3** Our Primary Objective: to transform our students into innovative, ethical and creative life-long learners, with a drive for excellence, and a passion for challenges, matched only by their desire to enrich their communities.
- A 1.4** Our Corporate Mantra: At SBCS we promise to deliver an excellent service;  
At a profit if we can  
At a loss if we must  
But always excellence

### B SCOPE

- B 1.1** This document seeks to address equal opportunities at SBCS in accordance with the Equal Opportunities Act of Trinidad 2000. SBCS is guided and seeks to address equal opportunities in the working environment, and as it applies to our student population. It addresses the expectations of staff in their interaction with each other, management's responsibilities to implementing the policy and the consequences for contravening behavior in accordance with our HR policy.

### C THE POLICY STATEMENT

- C 1.1** SBCS Global Learning Institute Ltd is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst its workforce. SBCS aims to create an environment where students and staff are treated fairly and equally regardless of their age, race, gender, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic background, religion, political beliefs, pregnancy or maternity status, HIV/ Aids status or disability.
- C 1.2** SBCS is committed to ensuring that every member of staff has a working environment that promotes dignity and respect, and where individual differences and the contributions of staff are recognized and valued.
- C 1.3** We also continuously aim to foster a positive learning environment and culture for students, where they are comfortable to contribute to the classroom and within which they are able to develop to their full potential. We are committed to ensuring

that their admission to the institution and progression within their studies will be determined only by personal merit and by performance.

- C 1.4** SBCS is committed to serving our students by striving to ensure we continuously select and deliver world-class programmes that are relevant to the needs to all industries, and can produce graduates who add real value to their workplace, be it locally or globally. We operate a non-denominational, private learning institution, where we do everything in our power to ensure that students are treated equally regardless of race, gender, disability, marital status, age or religious belief. (HR Staff Code of Ethics and Business Conduct, 2011, p 18).
- C 1.5** SBCS will take steps to ensure that individuals are treated fairly and equally and that decisions on recruitment, selection, training, promotion, career management and provision of other benefits are based solely on objective and job-related criteria.
- C 1.6** SBCS is dedicated to providing a safe and non-discriminatory working environment for all employees. Such a commitment requires that all employees understand and abide by the institution's policies dealing with appropriate treatment of and interface with co-workers and all fellow employees. (HR Staff Code of Ethics and Business Conduct, 2011, p 14.)
- C 1.7** All employees must treat their co-workers fairly and courteously without regard to position, race, colour, creed, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability. Due respect and patience should guide each interface, whether in person, by telephone, in electronic media or otherwise. (HR Staff Code of Ethics and Business Conduct, 2011, p 14)
- C 1.8** SBCS also ensures that we comply with the [Equal Opportunities Act 2000](#), as it covers Discrimination against applicants and students 15. (1) & 15. (2) Whereby an educational establishment, Board or other institution, shall not discriminate against a person:
- By refusing or failing to accept that person's application for admission as a student; or
  - In terms and conditions as which it admits him as a student.
  - An educational establishment shall not discriminate against a student
  - By denying or limiting the student's access to any benefits, facilities or services provided by the educational establishment.

### D DISCRIMINATION (Excerpt from the EOA 2000)

**D 1.1** According to the [Equal Opportunity Act, 2000](#) areas of discrimination where the law offers protection are:

**D 1.1.1** Application to discrimination limited – applies to discrimination in relation to employment, education, the provision of goods and services and the provision of accommodation, if the discrimination is -

- Discrimination on the grounds of status
- Discrimination by victimization

**D 1.2** Discrimination

A person discriminates against another person on the grounds of status if by reason of:

**D 1.2.1** The status of the aggrieved person

- A characteristic that appertains generally to persons of the status of the aggrieved person or
- A characteristic that is generally imputed to persons of the status of the aggrieved person

**D 1.2.2** Discrimination by victimization

A person discriminates by victimization against another person, in any circumstances relevant for the purposes of any provision of this Act if he treats the person victimized less favourably than in those circumstances he treats or would treat other persons.

**D 1.2.3** Offensive behavior

A person shall not otherwise in private, do any act which

- Is reasonably likely, in all circumstances, to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or a group of persons
- Is done because of the gender, race, ethnicity, origin, or religion of the other person or of some or all the persons in the group; and
- This is done with the intention of inciting gender, racial or religious hatred.

**D 1.3** The Equal Opportunities Act also covers the following

- Discrimination against applicants
- Discrimination against employees
- Vocational Training

**D 1.4** Discrimination is only permitted in limited situations if there is a genuine occupational requirement for an individual to have a particular characteristic.

## **E IMPLEMENTING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

**E 1.1** SBCS will take active steps to promote good practice. The institution will:

- Work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimization based on position, race, color, creed, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability, whether actual, perceptive, or associative.
- Promote an inclusive culture, good practice in teaching, learning, and assessment, and good management practice, through the development of codes of best practice, policies, and training.
- Take positive action wherever possible to support this policy and its aims.
- Publish this policy widely amongst staff and students.

**E 1.2** SBCS' managers will ensure that:

- Employees and students are aware of the Equal Opportunities Policy and the procedures for making a complaint.
  - Students can raise the matter through the Student Grievance and Complaints Procedure.
  - Employees can raise the matter through the institution's Conflict Resolution Procedure.
- Equality is taken into consideration, where appropriate, in policies, strategies and procedures to ensure that they promote equality and do not unlawfully discriminate.
- Employees and students are provided with appropriate avenues to raise any concerns.
- Procedures are in place for the fair appointment, promotion and development of employees, and the fair selection, teaching and assessment of students, free from unjustifiable discrimination.

**E 1.3** SBCS will apply equal opportunity requirements throughout all of its employment practices, and will ensure equal opportunities through the following measures:

- Recruitment and Selection
  - Employment decisions will be made based on fair and objective criteria and in accordance with SBCS's recruitment and selection policy.
  - Selecting applicants on the basis of character, ability, skill, experience and training and without reference age, race, gender, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic background, religion, political beliefs, pregnancy or maternity status, HIV/ Aids status or disability.
  - Being impartial to physical and age impediments, so long as these factors do not affect the person's ability to effectively perform the duties



of the job under consideration (SBCS Human Resources Policies & Procedures Handbook 2022, p. 22-23)

- Positions will be advertised internally in order to provide an equal opportunity for all interested persons to apply. (SBCS Human Resources Policies & Procedures Handbook, p. 13-15)
- Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements, which are necessary for the effective performance of the job.
- Training and Development
  - SBCS encourages employees to improve their technical and intellectual competence by providing training both on and off the job and by pursuing and successfully completing appropriate courses of study.
  - The organisation will assist in arranging courses that are of appropriate technical and intellectual content which will improve the employee's competence. SBCS endeavours to provide a work environment that is conducive to individual growth and self-development (SBCS Human Resources Policies & Procedures Handbook 2022, p. 53-57)
  - All new staff will receive induction training. As part of the induction, process staff will be made aware of this policy, and discuss what it means to them.
  - All staff will be subject to a 6-month review and yearly review process and will involve a discussion to identify available and appropriate training methods.

**E 1.4** Work/Life Balance - SBCS aims to encourage a healthy work-life balance to staff through the following:

- HRSC and HR monthly initiatives
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Flextime
- Maternity Leave
- Paternity Leave
- Staff Appreciation

**E 1.5** Workplace Environment - Documented in the SBCS Human Resources Policies & Procedures Handbook, 2022 (p. 32-33) and Staff Code of Ethics and Business Conduct handbook, (p. 15-16) breeches or allegations of harassment will be taken seriously, and the requisite action will be taken.

**E 1.6** Review - Periodically SBCS will review its practices, policies and procedures to identify and remove any barriers to equal opportunities.

### F DISCIPLINE AND GRIEVANCES

- F 1.1** Breaches in Ethics and/or Conduct, if established will lead to a warning, reprimand or suspension and serious misconduct will lead to summary dismissal.
- F 1.2** During the investigation into any alleged wrongdoing, it is required that all concerned give full cooperation to the investigating personnel.
- F 1.3** Disciplinary procedure is clearly detailed in HR Code of Ethics and Staff Conduct, 2011, p.21 -22
- F 1.4** SBCS Human Resources Policies & Procedures Handbook, 2022, p.36-37; 61 provides details on our process when someone has a grievance, it also provides our disciplinary procedure for discriminatory behaviour.

### G COMMUNICATION

- G 1.1** SBCS will share this policy with all staff via email and our Intranet. It will be shared with all staff in our Orientation Programme.
- G 1.2** SBCS will share this policy with all students via the SBCS Student Orientation Handbook.

### H RESPONSIBILITIES

- H 1.1** The Management of SBCS is responsible for ensuring that all staff is aware of this policy and that is put into practice.
- H 1.2** Each Manager must ensure that all personnel policies along with the Human Resource Department, procedures and employment practices do not discriminate in any way and remain consistent with this policy
- H 1.3** Managers have the responsibility to set the standards of acceptable behavior expected of staff, and so must act in fairness and equity.
- H 1.4** Each manager is accountable for delivering the equality commitment in their area or responsibility. Human Resources (HR) also has specific responsibilities for supporting and guiding the implementation of this policy.

**H 1.5** All employees and students of SBCS, those carrying out work or delivering services on behalf of the institution and any partners, are required to comply with this policy. Everyone is required to promote a culture free from illegal discrimination and all forms of harassments and bullying. In addition, failure to adhere to these responsibilities under the law may lead to civil actions or criminal proceedings. Any incidents of discrimination, harassment or bullying will be investigated and may be grounds for expulsion of a student and for employees may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice – subject to the relevant process being followed.

### **I Review**

**I 1.1** This policy will be reviewed annually.