

# Equality and Diversity Policy

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## **Purpose**

This policy sets out the University's commitment towards the development of inclusive and supportive learning and working environments for all students and staff where all individuals have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all staff and students. Visitors, contractors, stakeholders and ALL NC IUL staff will be expected to abide by this policy.

## **Definitions**

A set of definitions used in this policy is set out in Appendix 1.

## **Legislative context**

This policy is set within the following legislation:

The Equality Act 2010  
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)  
Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)  
Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act (1993)  
Criminal Justice and Public Disorder Act (1995)  
Protection from Harassment Act (1997)  
Crime and Disorder Act (1998)  
Human Rights Act (1998)  
Employment Relations Act (1999)

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)

This policy will be reviewed in the light of any new legislation.

## **Policy statement**

The University is committed to supporting, developing and promoting equality and diversity in all of its practices; and it aims to establish an inclusive culture, free from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

The University will, in carrying out its activities, have due regard to:

- the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- the promotion of good relations between different groups;
- the elimination of unlawful indirect and direct discrimination.

In publishing this policy statement the University is committing to the following principles:

- To use equality information to inform the University's Strategic Plan.
- To be active in meeting general and specific equality duties which will be informed by data and considered analysis.
- To deliver and monitor the equality and diversity policy using evidence-based data.
- To support staff to meet their equality and diversity responsibilities through learning and development programmes.
- To ensure that equalities information is accessible, current, and shared openly whilst observing data protection/GDPR regulations.
- To monitor all stages of the employment process, including reporting equality information annually on staff, both current and prospective.
- To monitor all stages of the student cycle including reporting equality information annually on students, both current and prospective.
- To work towards establishing a workforce that reflects the student body and the diversity of local and regional communities.

## **Responsibilities**

The Equality & Diversity Committee is responsible for implementing this policy statement. The Equality & Diversity Committee will:

- Ensure that the University meets its legal obligations relating to equality and diversity.
- Oversee the development, monitoring and implementation of the University's equality and diversity policies and practice.
- Oversee the publication and review of the Equality and Diversity policy, in-line with legislation and good practice.
- Publish annual progress reports detailing progress made against university-wide aims and objectives and key performance indicators in the Student Recruitment Strategy.
- Publish yearly equality monitoring data.

Act as equality and diversity champions and engage with their respective faculties and services to promote the equality and diversity agenda.

University managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that procedures relating to staff recruitment, selection, career development, discipline and grievance are carried out in accordance with the statutory duties to promote equality and eliminate discrimination.
- Undertaking any risk assessments as appropriate to ensure any individual with a disability on NC IUL is kept safe and free from risk of harm.
- Any reasonable adjustment or adaptation required by an individual is available, accessible and implemented as appropriate.
- Fostering a culture in which equality and diversity considerations are embedded into their work areas.
- Ensuring staff and students are encouraged and enabled to reach their full potential, irrespective of their background or protected characteristic.
- Conducting equality analysis on policies and procedures to demonstrate that they have paid due regard to the needs of individuals with protected characteristics.
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are made available for students and staff, in accordance with the requirements of current legislation.

Members of staff are responsible for:

- Supporting, implementing and abiding by the aims and contents of this policy statement.
- Using their role to promote equality of opportunity for students and staff.
- Contributing to an inclusive environment which celebrates diversity.

## **Breach of the policy**

The University will take seriously any instances of non-adherence to the Equality and Diversity Policy by students, staff, stakeholders or visitors. Any instances of non-adherence will be investigated with the intent of resolving such matters. Where appropriate, such instances may be considered under the relevant disciplinary policy for staff or students.

Employees who believe there has been a breach of this policy may raise this through the Human Resource department.

Students who believe there has been a breach of this policy may complain through the University's Complaints Procedure.

Any visitor who believes there has been a breach of this policy may complain in writing through the University's Complaints Procedure.

## **Review**

The policy will be reviewed by the Equality & Diversity Committee in association with the HR department, employees and managers in response to statutory changes, changes in University procedures or structures or as a result of the monitoring of the application of the policy. In any event, the policy will be reviewed every six months.

## Appendix

### Definitions

#### Direct discrimination

Actions where people are treated less favourably than others on the grounds related to their identity as one of the above protected groups.

#### Diversity

Recognising, valuing and taking account of individuals' different backgrounds, knowledge, skills and experiences to create a more productive and effective educational community.

#### Equal opportunity

This is the right of individuals and protected groups to equality of access and outcome in employment and service delivery.

#### Equality

A situation where all are able to participate and where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

#### Equality analysis

Equality analysis is a way of considering the effect on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act, such as people of different ages. There are two reasons for this:

- to consider if there are any unintended consequences for some groups
- to consider if the policy will be fully effective for all target groups.

It involves using equality information, and the results of engagement with protected groups and others, to understand the actual effect or the potential effect of your functions, policies or decisions. It can help you to identify practical steps to tackle any negative effects or discrimination, to advance equality and to foster good relations.

#### Equality Management Group

The Equality management Group develops and monitors the implementation of the University's equality and diversity policies and strategies.

#### Harassment

There are three types of harassment which are unlawful under the Equality Act:

- Harassment related to a relevant protected characteristic; Sexual harassment;
- Less favourable treatment of a student because they submit to or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to sex.
- Pregnancy and maternity is not protected directly under the harassment provisions, however, unwanted sexual behaviour will amount to harassment related to sex.

### **Indirect discrimination**

This occurs where a condition or requirement has been put in place which applies to all, but, in practice, has a detrimental effect upon a group of individuals that cannot be fully justified.

### **Positive action**

This is action taken by an organisation to provide development opportunities for 'Protected groups' who are demonstrably and statistically under-represented within the University.

### **Protected groups**

Equality legislation currently provides protection against unlawful discrimination in employment and service delivery on the following grounds:

Age  
Disability  
Gender Identity  
Marriage and civil partnership  
Maternity and Paternity  
Race  
Sex  
Religion and Belief  
Sexual orientation

### **Victimisation**

This is the treatment of someone less favourably because they have made or might make a complaint about discrimination under one of the above protected group categories.



## Version Control

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