

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

Our overall goal is to create a fair and inclusive environment in the University.

Vice-Chancellor's Introduction

An Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy is not only about ensuring that we meet our legal obligations but also about making clear our commitment to equality of opportunity and diversity and about reinforcing our ethos in respect of encouraging fairness and equality of treatment for all. A University should be a place where students and staff hold common values about respect for others and about respecting the differences between people. These common values underpin and inform our Policy. The University is committed to fairness in its practices and in meeting the needs of our diverse student and staff bodies. Where appropriate and within our means, the University will take positive action to meet these commitments.

Preamble

This Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy was drawn up by the University Equal Opportunities Committee and approved by Senate and University Council, after consultation with representatives of students, staff and management. This policy applies to all students and staff of the University and to all activities associated with the University, whether or not on University property. Discrimination can be unlawful and may render both the discriminator and the University liable in law for any unlawful actions. There are several elements in the promotion of equality and diversity; sometimes these may be in conflict; the aim of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Committee will be to achieve a balanced approach to the competing claims.

Policy

We want to make the University one in which people are given the best possible opportunities to make a success of their lives, whatever their background. Everybody has a valuable contribution to make; our challenge is to unlock the talents and potential of all our staff and students. We celebrate diversity and tolerance so that different cultures can thrive, adding to the richness and experience of our community. This implies that:

- 1 The University will seek to create an open, trusting environment, in which there is an absence of prejudice, discrimination and harassment.
- 2 The University will promote a positive climate of respect and co-operation, with open and tolerant discussion of important issues, expecting its members to respect one another as fellow human beings and treat one another with dignity; prejudice will be challenged where it becomes apparent in behaviour.
- 3 The University deplores all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination and seeks to provide an environment free from discrimination against students, staff and others on the grounds of gender, race, sexual orientation, religion/belief, disability or any other protected characteristic.
- 4 The University will treat harassment as a form of discrimination and will seek to eliminate it.
- 5 The University will promote cross-cultural contact between different communities at all levels, foster understanding and respect, and seek to break down barriers.
- 6 The University will seek diversity of knowledge, background and experience in recruiting staff and students, and will value flexibility in working patterns.

- 7 The University will encourage initiative, creativity and innovation, helping staff and students to be open to new ideas, to learn, to share good practice, and to succeed.
- 8 The Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy will be drawn to the attention of staff and students regularly, and everyone will be helped to understand, through induction, training and development, what it means to celebrate diversity and will be held accountable for adherence to its values.
- 9 Relevant policies and procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are objective and fair, and all buildings and facilities will be inspected regularly to ensure that they are supportive of students and staff with disabilities.
- 10 All staff and students have personal responsibility for the practical application of this Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy. The University requires all students and staff to ensure that their conduct conforms with this policy (and with any practice or procedure developed to implement this policy) whilst on University premises or undertaking University business. This policy applies to all functions associated with recruitment and admission of students, teaching and learning, assessment, research, course development, pastoral care, reachout, employment, provision of facilities/ services, procurement, funding, provision of advice and working in partnership.