

University of Brighton

Equality and Diversity Policy

Statement of Intent

The University of Brighton is committed to creating a stimulating and supportive learning and working environment based on mutual respect and trust. We will continue to celebrate and value diversity within the community of staff and students, to promote equality of opportunity and to challenge and strive to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

This policy is informed by law. However, the university also seeks to encourage and promote equality of opportunity amongst those groups and individuals within society who experience discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of particular social circumstances and who are not covered by existing legislation.

The university is committed to the fair treatment of all people, be they staff, students, visitors, or those applying for employment or study, regardless of disability, gender, sexual identity, marital status, family or caring responsibilities, race, colour, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, nationality, trade union membership and activity, political or religious beliefs, work or study pattern or contractual status.

The university acknowledges the duty of higher education in promoting equality of opportunity and furthering social inclusion. We recognise the link between equality and high quality performance and we understand that ensuring equality of opportunity is essential for the successful and innovative development of the university and its community.

The university's commitment to equality and diversity is made explicit throughout its Corporate Plan which declares a 'shared value' to "value the different contributions and experiences of all who make up our community; promoting equal treatment, mutual respect and understanding; respecting freedom of thought and its appropriate expression". Specifically the Plan commits the university "to provide an experience of higher education that is challenging and enjoyable for its students and staff; that embodies equality of treatment; and that equips its students to be socially purposeful professionals and citizens."

Purpose

The overall purpose of the policy is to provide:

- a statement of commitment to equality and diversity within the university;
- the overarching commitments and the framework that will guide the university's agenda on diversity and equality; and
- an outline of the rights and responsibilities to which all members of the university community are expected to adhere.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Governors has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the university meets the commitments detailed within this policy.

The Equal Opportunities Steering Group has responsibility for steering and monitoring action on equality and diversity in order to support achievement of the commitments set out within this policy.

Relevant committees have responsibility for monitoring progress on the implementation of equality and diversity in their areas.

Deans, Heads of Schools and Departments and managers are responsible for ensuring that staff and students are aware of their responsibilities, understand and apply this policy. They are also responsible for promoting equality and diversity throughout the activities in their area.

University schools offering or arranging student placements are responsible for familiarising themselves with the university's placement policies and supporting guidance.

All staff and students have rights and responsibilities in relation to the promotion of equality, and must ensure that their behaviour and actions do not discriminate unlawfully and that they are not harassing or bullying others.

Staff who have concerns about unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying are advised to contact a member of the Harassment Contacts Network, their line manager, a member of the Personnel Department or a trade union representative.

Students who have concerns about unlawful discrimination, harassment or bullying are advised to consult the Student Handbook and contact a member of the Harassment Contacts Network, the Students' Union, Student Services, their Course Tutor, Personal Tutor, Student Support Guidance Tutor or Head of School.

Staff with responsibility for teaching, support and welfare of students and those who manage others have a responsibility to identify, value and respond appropriately to varying needs and perspectives. In addition, all teaching staff are responsible for:

- promoting equality and diversity through their teaching programmes and through relations with students, staff and the wider community;
- ensuring that the curriculum covers the knowledge, skills and values which students need to tackle discrimination when they meet it and to help them to understand and value diversity; and
- ensuring that materials used to deliver the curriculum are accessible to a diverse range of students and adjusted to meet specific needs, and that they are free from sexist, racist and other discriminatory assumptions, images and languages, unless they are being studied as examples of such.

Staff with responsibility for research governance are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken by the university does not contravene this policy.

The Manager of Purchasing Services is responsible for ensuring that contractors and suppliers are aware of, and are committed to this policy.

This policy applies to all visitors to the university and representatives from other organisations attending the university.

Commitments

In order to translate the above policy into action, the university will:

- a. Communicate its commitment to equality and diversity to all members and prospective members of the university community, promote equality of opportunity and inform all staff and students of their rights and responsibilities in maintaining and promoting equality.
- b. Provide and promote a development programme for university staff, in order to equip them to welcome diversity and respect the rights and contributions of others.
- c. Communicate and consult with interested groups and individuals (both internal and external to the university).
- d. Monitor, review and impact assess university policies and activities and set objectives for progress and development.
- e. Ensure that its commitment to equality of opportunity and diversity is made explicit in contacts and partnerships with outside organisations.
- f. Ensure that an appropriate infrastructure and sufficient resources are made available to support and implement equality and diversity policies, schemes, plans and procedures.
- g. Ensure that students and staff know where to access information and support regarding equality, diversity, harassment and bullying issues.

The actions the university will take to implement these commitments are articulated in its [Single Equality Scheme](#).

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Equal Opportunities Steering Group to ensure its effectiveness in achieving equality of opportunity. Monitoring and review activity will include:

- collecting, analysing and publishing monitoring information for both staff and students;
- publishing annual reports detailing progress towards the actions set out in the university's single equality action plan;
- conducting and publishing equality impact assessments; and
- consulting with staff and students about equality and diversity issues at the university.

For further details about guidance or supporting policies, procedures and codes of practice please refer to the following documents:

[Single Equality Scheme](#)

[2007-2012 Corporate Plan](#)

[Code of Good Practice in Research](#)

[General Examination and Assessment Regulations for Taught Courses](#)

[Harassment Policy](#)

[Impact assessment guidance](#)

[Legal requirements and placements](#)

[Policy on Disabled Students and Placements](#)

[Policy on Harassment and Placement Students](#)

[Staff Grievance Procedure](#)

[Stress Management Policy](#)

[Student Complaints Procedure](#)

[Student Drug and Alcohol Policy](#)

[Student Mental Health Policy](#)

[University Student Handbook](#)

This document has been produced in consultation with the University and College Union, Unison and the Students' Union.

(approved by Board of Governors 22/02/2008)