**University of Wolverhampton Equality and Diversity Policy**



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# POLICY

1. **Introduction**

To a university like Wolverhampton which has a proud record of serving its communities going back over 180 years, the issues of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are of paramount importance. As the University of Opportunity, it is crucial that we do everything we can to enable all individuals to succeed. This is not simply about promoting acceptance of equal opportunity for all, that is giving everyone the identical opportunity but is more about recognising the different journeys people have in front of them, understanding and meeting their needs.

Our vision is to create an inclusive work and study environment by:

* Identifying and addressing Institutional, structural and cultural inequalities to ensure both staff and students can reach their full potential.
* Ensuring all staff and students are treated with respect and dignity in a safe environment.
* Creating a diverse workforce that reflects local demographics and our student population, at all levels within the University.
* Utilising and valuing the diverse skills, experience and knowledge of our staff and students.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this equality and diversity policy is to define the University’s approach to equality and diversity in the work and study place, setting out guidelines and explaining to staff and students how discrimination will be dealt with. In addition, we are demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation, primarily the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

1.2 Principles & Policy Statement

The University of Wolverhampton (hereafter ‘the University’) is fully committed to the advancement of equality and the elimination of unlawful and unfair discrimination.  It values the benefits that a diverse student and staff population brings to the university. The University will treat all people with respect and seeks to provide a positive environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

The University will not discriminate on the grounds of the following protected characteristics based on the Equality Act 2010, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.  It will not discriminate because of any other irrelevant factor and will build a culture that values equity, openness, fairness and transparency.

The University recognises that its students, staff and those who engage with it come from diverse cultures and backgrounds and may hold personal beliefs that differ from the beliefs and values articulated by this policy or other University policies.  Whilst respecting individuals' personal beliefs and acknowledging its duties not to discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief, the University expects its students, staff and visitors to uphold the values in its strategic plan and associated policies, practices and procedures at all times when engaging with the University.

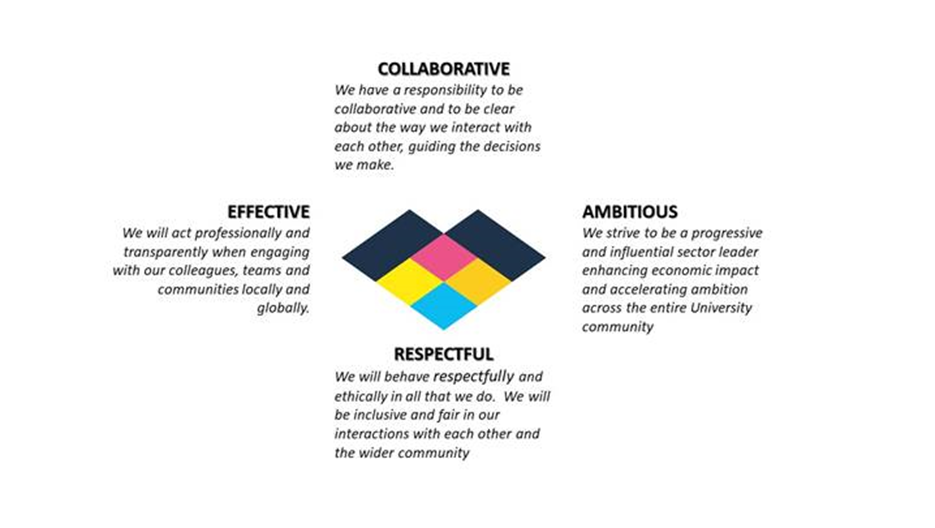
As a University of ‘Opportunity for all’. We are committed to the following values:

* Behave respectfully and ethically in all that we do
* Be inclusive and fair in our interactions with each other and with our wider community
* Act professionally, transparently, confidently, collaboratively and challengingly when engaging

with our communities locally and globally

* Listen and learn from others.

The implementation of this policy is in accordance with the University’s core values which are built into our CARE framework:



The University also undertakes the following commitments based on protected characteristics (highlighted above):

* We will have a zero-tolerance policy that is any abuse, harassment or bullying (for example, name-calling/derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behaviour, intrusive questions) will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the University’s Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Disciplinary Policy.
* Any propaganda, in the form of written materials, inappropriate music, graffiti or speeches, will not be tolerated. The University undertakes to remove any such propaganda whenever it appears on the premises.
* Students will not be denied access to courses, progression to other courses, or fair and equal treatment while on courses due to their protected characteristics, unless justifiable and legitimate restrictions exist.
* The curriculum will be examined and adapted where appropriate to ensure that it is delivered and developed in a way that it is inclusive. This will include ensuring that it does not rely on or reinforce stereotypical assumptions based on protected characteristics.
* Staff will not be excluded from employment, promotion or staff development opportunities unless for example legitimate impairment or health restrictions apply and reasonable adjustments cannot be made.
* The University will ensure that its environment, in terms of its pictures, images, publicity materials and literature, reflects the diversity of its staff and students.
* Equality and diversity issues will be addressed explicitly within performance management and staff/student reward schemes.
* The University will respect the confidentiality of all staff and students and will not reveal information without the prior agreement of the individual
* Where data analysis identifies ongoing and significant disparities between the experiences, outcomes or perceptions of students and staff from protected characteristics compared to others the University will seek to address the issues

We also recognise that there are also specific issues related to some protected characteristics and these are added as an appendices to this policy.

The University will take active steps to promote good practice. In particular it will in line with the Public Sector Duty:

* Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
* Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
* Subject its policies to continuous assessment in order to examine how they affect protected groups and to identify whether its policies help to achieve equality of opportunity for all these groups, or whether they have an adverse impact.
* Monitor the recruitment and progress of all students and staff, collecting and collating equalities information and data as required by law or for the furtherance of University equalities objectives.
* Take positive action wherever possible to support this policy and its aims.
* Publish this policy widely amongst staff and students, together with policy assessments, equality analysis and results of monitoring.

1. **Scope**

The policy is applicable to all those who interact with the University. This includes, but is not limited to:

* All students (i.e. everyone who has a contract for study with the University, including apprentices)
* All members of staff holding a contract of employment, and academic visitors from other institutions;
* Honorary or associate members;
* Workers employed through the Temporary Staffing Service;
* Voluntary workers and interns;
* External members appointed to University committees;
* Visitors, including external persons or agencies using the University’s premises, facilities or services;
* Contractors working at the University;
* Individuals and organisations working or acting on the University’s behalf, including suppliers of goods and services;
* Applicants for study and employment, including offer holders.

Decision-making in relation to all university activities will be based on objective criteria only and any irrelevant information will not form part of the process**.**

2.1 Any breach of this policy as well as Individual behaviour, actions or words that transgress the policy will not be tolerated and where appropriate will be dealt with in line with the University’s Dignity at Work and Study Policy:<https://www.wlv.ac.uk/staff/media/departments/human-resources/policies-and-procedures/Dignity-at-Work-and-Study-Policy.pdf>. This policy also defines the different forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

1. **Roles and Responsibilities**
   1. Corporate

The Joint Equality and Diversity Committee shall monitor that the University is fulfilling its corporate obligations.

* 1. Managers

Managers are required to: Set examples and standards of behavior in the workplace. Ensure their staff are familiar with this policy. Deal with any unacceptable behavior in their teams and make it clear to staff that such behavior will not be tolerated.

* 1. Members of Staff and Students

All staff and students have a responsibility not to discriminate against or harass other staff and students and anyone accessing our service. Staff and students should challenge discrimination and/or report any unacceptable behavior that comes from any person whether they be a member of University staff, students’ body or clients, visitors or employees of other organisations, to their manager or Human Resources. Both staff and students can also report via the Universities Incident reporting tool, which also gives the option of doing so anonymously (<https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/equality-and-diversity/incident-reporting/>)

Staff and students have a responsibility to act in a manner appropriate to this policy whilst in the course of their study or employment, and to uphold the principles of fairness and equality in all aspects of their behavior.

* 1. Human Resources

Human Resources has responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the policy and ensuring that all related policies, procedures and practices adhere to this policy.

1. **Training**

All staff have to undergo mandatory on-line equality, diversity and inclusion training. This covers our obligations under the equality act 2010 as well as defining all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimization. The training makes reference to this policy. We also have mandatory Unconscious bias training. Both on-line training courses are repeated on an annual basis staff are reminded via email. The completion of the mandatory training is linked to the staff ‘My DPD’ process. Other training or programmes linked to E&D are:

* Respect and dignity in the workplace’ training. This has been delivered to our staff in Estates and Facilities (Catering, security, cleaning, maintenance and caretakers) it will be rolled out to all staff at the University.
* A reverse mentoring programme, that is one in which staff with protected characteristics, using their lived experience of working at the University mentor senior staff.
* An online ‘Let's Talk About Race in the Workplace’ training course.

All training will be made available in a range of formats according to the needs of the trainee and different groups of staff, students and others.

1. **Legal Obligations**

The University will meet all legal and statutory obligations under relevant legislation and, where appropriate, anticipate future legal requirements related to this policy. This will be informed by:

• The Equality Act (2010) and associated secondary legislation.

• Criminal Justice and Immigration Act (2008).

• The Racial and Religious Hatred Act (2006).

• The Civil Partnership Act (2004).

• The Gender Recognition Act (2004).

• Criminal Justice Act (2003).

• The Human Rights Act (1998).

• The Protection from Harassment Act (1997).

• Special Education Needs and Disability Act (2001).

In addition, this will be informed by the Codes of Practice or Guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and other relevant bodies. These Codes are not legally binding (though they are admissible as evidence in Employment Tribunals) and the University supports them fully.

There are no exceptions to this policy.

1. **Amendments**

This Policy was approved by the University’s Corporate Management Team/Board of Governors on XXX 2022. The University may change this Policy at any time, and where appropriate to reflect changes in the law, demographics and internal requirements.

1. **Information and resources**  
   For general queries, please contact:

Associate Director Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Sukhvinder Singh.

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**Appendices 1**

**Policy Statement on Disability Equality**

Disability is a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010 and is defined as ‘a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

The term ‘disabled people’ is the preferred term within the University’s Disabled Staff Network. It is therefore the term of preference for university communications. The University acknowledges that many people do not define themselves as ‘disabled’. Where staff or students choose not to identify under the disability label but fit within the description of a disabled person under the Equality Act 2010, they are still included within this policy.

The University undertakes the following.

* Disability-related abuse, harassment or bullying (name-calling/derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behavior and intrusive questions) will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the University’s Dignity at Work and Study Policy.
* Disablist propaganda, in the form of written materials, inappropriate music, graffiti or speeches, will not be tolerated. The University undertakes to remove any such propaganda whenever it appears on the premises.
* The University recognises that disabled staff and students come from diverse backgrounds, and many face the possibility of multiple discrimination. It will therefore strive to ensure they do not face discrimination on the grounds of disability or in relation to other aspects of their identity, for example, their race, age, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation.
* The University will provide a supportive environment for staff and students who wish their status as a disabled person to be known. However, it is the right of the individual to choose whether they wish to be open about their disability, impairment or health. To ‘out’ someone, whether staff or student, without their permission is a form of harassment and, possibly, a criminal offence.
* The University will seek to anticipate the needs of disabled people and make reasonable adjustments.  Some adjustments are, however, dependent on the University knowing that a member of staff or student is disabled.  Such potential limitations on the University's ability to make adjustments will be highlighted to staff and students to assist them in making informed decisions on disclosure.
* Staff and students undergoing medical procedures related to impairment or ill health will receive positive support from the University to meet their particular needs during this period.
* Procedures to monitor and manage student / staff absence will take account of absence for disability-related reasons.
* Having consulted with disabled staff and students and organisations of disabled people, the University will include disability issues in internal attitudinal surveys, and when monitoring complaints of harassment.
* In providing accommodation for students, any disability-related issues or concerns raised by disabled students will be handled by the accommodation office and will be treated fairly and in line with the University’s obligations under equality law.

**Policy Statement on Gender Equality**

When speaking about gender we are referring to the protected characteristic of ‘sex’ as identified within the Equality Act 2010. This policy statement outlines the University’s approach to ensure that none of its staff, students and visitors are a victim of sex discrimination. The University has a separate Policy Statement on Gender Identity Equality, which outlines its support for trans and non-binary people.

The University is a committed member of the Athena Swan Charter Mark. As such it accepts the key principles of the Charter and seeks to reflect them in its work on gender equality.

The University undertakes the following:

* Sexist abuse, harassment or bullying (name-calling/derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behavior and intrusive questions) will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under the appropriate procedure.
* Sexist propaganda, in the form of written materials, inappropriate music, graffiti or speeches, will not be tolerated. The University undertakes to remove any such propaganda whenever it appears on the premises.
* The University will encourage male staff and students to proactively support the cause of gender equality, and to push themselves to better understand the unique challenges facing women students and staff members.
* In providing accommodation for students, any concerns or issues related to gender equality raised by students will be handled by the accommodation office and will be treated fairly and in line with the University’s obligations under equality law.

**Policy Statement on Gender Identity Equality**

The University recognises that there can be differences between physical sex and gender identity The University is fully committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination, including harassment and victimization, on the grounds of gender identity. Where this policy refers to ‘trans and non-binary people’, it has in mind people who do not identity with the gender assigned to them at birth. This includes, but is not limited to, those who are undergoing or have completed, gender reassignment surgery. The University also recognises that it is up to each individual how they choose to express their gender identity, and that the University should take all appropriate steps to facilitate this self-expression.

The University undertakes the following.

* Transphobic or enbyphobic abuse, harassment or bullying (name-calling/derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behavior and intrusive questions) will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the University’s Dignity at Work and Study Policy.
* Transphobic or enbyphobic propaganda, in the form of written materials or inappropriate music, graffiti or speeches, will not be tolerated. The University undertakes to remove any such propaganda whenever it appears on the premises.
* Trans and non-binary people have the right to use the correct facilities for their gender identity, including changing rooms and toilets. A trans or non-binary person should not be required to use disabled toilet facilities, nor facilities of their previously assigned gender. Where the University provides All Genders facilities, these are provided solely as an alternative for those trans and non-binary people who choose to use them.
* Where female-only spaces exist within the University, they should be open to all whom self-define and live as women, including trans women. Where male-only spaces exist within the University, they should be open to all whom self-define and live as men, including trans men.
* The University recognises that trans or non-binary staff and students come from diverse backgrounds, and many face the possibility of multiple discrimination. It will therefore strive to ensure they do not face discrimination on the grounds of their gender identity or in relation to other aspects of their identity, for example, their race, age, religion, disability or sexual orientation. In addition, assumptions will not be made about the sex of partners of trans or non-binary staff or students.
* The University will encourage cis-gendered staff and students to proactively support the cause of gender identity equality, and to push themselves to better understand the unique challenges facing trans and non-binary people.
* The University will respect the confidentiality of all trans and non-binary staff and students and will not reveal information without the prior agreement of the individual.
* The University will provide a supportive environment for staff and students who wish their gender identity to be known. However, it is the right of the individual to choose whether they wish to be open about their gender identity. To ‘out’ someone, whether staff or student, without their permission is a form of harassment and, possibly, a criminal offence.
* The University will seek to anticipate the needs of trans and non-binary people and make reasonable adjustments.  Some adjustments are, however, dependent on the University knowing that a member of staff or student identifies as trans or non-binary.  Such potential limitations on the University's ability to make adjustments will be highlighted to staff and students to assist them in making informed decisions on disclosure.
* Staff and students undergoing medical and surgical procedures related to gender reassignment will receive positive support from the University to meet their particular needs during this period. The process for Staff Members is outlined in the Trans and Gender Reassignment Policy and Procedure for Staff.
* Procedures to monitor and manage student / staff absence will take account of absence for reasons relating to gender reassignment.

**Policy Statement on Race Equality**

'Race' is identified as a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010, covering colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins. Where this policy uses the term 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (B.A.ME)' it has in mind all staff and students who identify with a non-White ethnicity. When it uses the term 'Other Ethnic Minority' it has in mind non-B.A.ME staff and students who self-identify as belonging to an ethnic minority".

The University recognises that Jewish and Muslim people experience prejudice and discrimination due to the intersection of religious faith and race. It is committed to combating Anti-Semitic and Islamophobic discrimination, harassment and victimization. Where this Policy Statement refers to prohibiting racist acts or racism, this includes all Anti-Semitic and Islamophobic acts of that type. The University defines Anti-Semitism as a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. The University defines Islamophobia as being rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.

The University is a committed member of the Race Equality Charter Mark, gaining a bronze award in October 2020. As such it accepts the key principles of the Charter and seeks to reflect them in its work on gender equality.

The University undertakes the following.

* Racist abuse, harassment or bullying (name-calling/derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behavior and intrusive questions) will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the University’s Dignity at Work and Study Policy.
* Racist propaganda, in the form of written materials, inappropriate music, graffiti or speeches, will not be tolerated.  The University undertakes to remove any such propaganda whenever it appears on the premises.

**Policy Statement on Sexual Orientation Equality**

'Sexual Orientation' is identified as a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010, covering the sex(s) someone is sexually attracted to. Where this policy uses the term 'LGB' it is intended to cover people who do not define themselves as heterosexual. This policy does not cover trans people except where they also identify within the LGB term. The University has a separate policy statement on Gender Identity Equality.

The University undertakes the following.

* Homophobic or biphobic abuse, harassment or bullying (name-calling/derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behavior and intrusive questions) will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the University’s Dignity at Work and Study Policy.
* Homophobic or biphobic propaganda, in the form of written materials or inappropriate music, graffiti or speeches, will not be tolerated. The University undertakes to remove any such propaganda whenever it appears on the premises.
* The University will provide a supportive environment for staff and students who wish their sexual orientation to be known. However, it is the right of the individual to choose whether they wish to be open about their sexual orientation. To ‘out’ someone, whether staff or student, without their permission is a form of harassment and, possibly, a criminal offence.