# Equality and Diversity Policy

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# 1. Policy statement

1.1 University Centre Quayside (UCQ) actively promotes equality and diversity in all aspects of its work and aims to provide an environment where all individuals have the opportunity to achieve their full potential with a feeling of self-esteem.

1.2 The advancement of true equality of opportunity, the embracing of diversity and the treatment of people with due regard and respect for difference requires monitoring, target setting and the development of programmes of positive action.

# 2. Scope

2.1 The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply equally to all employees, whether part time or full time on a substantive or fixed-term contract, and also to associated persons such as associates, agency staff, contractors and others employed under a contract of service.

2.2 Staff have personal responsibility for the application of this policy. As part of employee induction, staff are expected to read and familiarise themselves with this policy and to ensure that this policy is properly observed and fully complied with.

2.3 This policy is also of particular relevance to directors, line managers and other employees concerned with recruitment, training and promotion procedures and employment decisions which affect others.

# 3. Statutory duties

3.1 UCQ will abide by current statutory duties for students and staff, in line with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and resulting duty to:

3.1.1 eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
3.1.2 advance equality of opportunity
3.1.3 foster good relations between different groups

# 4. Explanation of terms

4.1 **Age**: this refers to a person belonging to a particular age group, which can mean people of the same age (e.g. age 32) or a range of ages (e.g. 18-30 year olds, or people over 50)

4.2 **Civil Partnership**: a legal relationship which can be registered by two people who aren't related to each other. These are available to both same-sex and opposite-sex couples.

4.3 **Direct discrimination**: less favourable treatment of a person compared with another person because of a protected characteristic.

4.4 **Disability**: a person has a disability if s/he has a physical or intellectual impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

4.5 **Disadvantage**: an unfavourable circumstance or condition that reduces the chances of success or effectiveness.

4.6 **Diversity**: where many different types of people are included.

4.7 **Family status**: identifies whether an individual has children or does not have children.

4.8 **Gender**: identifies an individual's sexual group; whether the individual identifies as a male or female.

4.9 **Gender re-assignment**: the process of changing or transitioning from one gender to another.

4.10 **Harassment/Bullying**: unwelcome comments or behaviour that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment for them.

4.11 **Indirect discrimination**: occurs where a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to everyone, but the provision, criterion or practice puts or would put members of one group at a particular disadvantage and is not a justifiable means of achieving a legitimate aim.

4.12 **Marital status**: identifies whether an individual is married, single or in a civil partnership.

4.13 **Nationality**: the status of belonging to a particular nation, whether by birth or naturalisation.

4.14 **Positive action**: refers to a range of lawful actions that seek to overcome or minimise disadvantage (e.g. in employment opportunities) that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs.

4.15 **Pregnancy and maternity**: Pregnancy refers to women who are pregnant, whilst maternity covers a period of 26 weeks after birth. The Equality Act prohibits discrimination because of pregnancy and maternity in employment, education and in the provision of goods and services.

4.16 **Protected Characteristics**: refers to the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful.  The characteristics are: age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

4.17 **Public sector equality duty**: the duty on a public authority or body when carrying out its functions to have due regard of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity.

4.18 **Race, ethnic or nation origins**: are terms used to describe a group of people whose ancestors came from the same country or cultural group.  They refer to an individual's ancestry, which may not be the same as the individual's nationality.

4.19 **Religion**: refers to an individual's faith or beliefs. **Non-belief** refers to individuals who do not hold faith or beliefs.

4.20 **Sexual orientation**: identifies an individual's sexual preference, e.g. whether the individual is heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, transgender or another sexual orientation.

4.21 **Stakeholders**: people who have an interest in a subject, issue or organisation.

4.22 **Trade union membership**: identifies whether the individual is, or is not, a member of a trade union.

4.23 **Transgender**: refers to a person with gender dysphoria (a gender identity that is different from their anatomical sex) who feels a consistent and overwhelming desire to live their life in the gender that is opposite to that assigned to them at birth.

4.24 **Victimisation**: occurs when someone is treated less favourably because of their involvement in a discrimination complaint.

4.25 **Zero Tolerance**: refers to a principle whereby behaviour, attitudes and language which may be deemed to be offensive, derogatory or discriminatory is not overlooked but challenged – with the aim of effecting change or redress.

# 5. Principles

5.1 UCQ is committed to treating all of its staff, students and stakeholders fairly and equitably regardless of a protected characteristic, including age, race or ethnicity, disability, gender, gender preference, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, non-belief, membership of professional associations or trade unions, marital status, family responsibility and socio-economic standing. UCQ will ensure that no unjustifiable requirements or conditions are imposed that could disadvantage individuals on any of the above grounds.

5.2 UCQ expresses its opposition to all forms of discrimination and its intention to take positive action in promoting equality and justice. UCQ is committed to the elimination of unfair discrimination through the adoption of a zero-tolerance principle and to the provision of equality for all, in education, training and employment.

5.3 UCQ recognises the influence it has externally with many people and organisations with whom it interacts, and it intends that this influence shall be used to promote equality and diversity. It recognises the concept of institutional racism and is committed to the elimination of the root causes of this concept.

5.4 UCQ seeks to create an accessible institution and will take positive action to create a supportive and relevant learning and working environment in which all have the opportunity to achieve their potential. In order to meet these objectives, UCQ will take positive action including seeking and delivering adequate resources to implement this policy. UCQ will review the equality implications of its policies and procedures and monitor their outcomes.

5.5    UCQ will ensure that all procedures treat individuals solely on the basis of their merit and abilities.

5.6    UCQ recognises that passive support for equality and diversity is not sufficient as inequalities created by indirect discrimination, victimisation, harassment, segregation and stereotyping, affects everyone.  Challenging inequality must be the responsibility of all members of the UCQ community.

## 6.    Promotion and commitment

6.1    UCQ will be proactive in promoting equality through embracing, valuing and recognising difference.

6.2    UCQ is committed to fulfilling a wide range of equality objectives to tackle all facets of inequality and discrimination, to create genuine equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

6.3    New staff and students will be made aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy and the behaviour expected of them during induction, through the staff/student handbook and the information published on the virtual learning environment (VLE).

6.4    All staff will be required to complete a declaration confirming they have read and understood this policy and agree to work to the expected standards.  All staff, including all levels of management, will also undertake regular Equality and Diversity training.

## 7.    Responsibilities and duties

7.1 Academic Council: It is the overall responsibility of the Academic Council to:

7.1.1    Ensure that UCQ complies with its statutory obligations with regard to equality and diversity
7.1.2    Develop strategies and set targets for implementing effective equality and diversity practices
7.1.3    Ensure that students have equal access to educational services
7.1.4    Ensure that recruitment and selection of staff and students is non-discriminatory
7.1.5    Ensure that staff have equal access to training and development opportunities
7.1.6    Ensure that staff are appropriately informed on equality and diversity issues
7.1.7    Ensure that all students are made aware of the company's Equality and Diversity Policy
7.1.8    Monitor data collected on equality and diversity at regular intervals
7.1.9    Promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

7.2 Administrative and Academic staff**:** It is the responsibility of all administrative and academic staff to:

7.2.1   Comply with UCQ's statutory obligations with regard to equality and diversity

7.2.2   Comply with UCQ's Equality and Diversity Policy

7.2.3   Undergo training on equality and diversity issues as required

7.2.4   Maintain, where applicable, sufficient records to enable the effective monitoring of equality and diversity issues

7.2.5   Bring any allegations of discrimination to the attention of the appropriate manager, in accordance with UCQ procedures

7.2.6   Ensure that schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of cultural diversity, gender and disability

7.2.7   Promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

7.3 Students: It is the responsibility of all UCQ students to:

7.3.1   Comply with the necessary statutory obligations with regard to equality and diversity

7.3.2   Undergo awareness raising on equality and diversity issues

7.3.3   Bring any allegations of discrimination to the attention of academic or administrative staff, in accordance with UCQ's procedures

7.3.4   Respect and develop good relationships between people from different groups

# 8.   Implementing this policy

### 8.1   Students: Recruitment and admissions

UCQ will ensure that:

8.1.1   recruitment and publicity materials are designed in a range of formats to ensure they are free from bias and stereotypes, and encourage applicants from all groups in the community;

8.1.2   applicants for courses are considered on the basis of their ability to meet the entry criteria, as specified in the course information and Admissions Policy;

8.1.3   applicants are not treated less favourably because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation;

8.1.4   applicants are interviewed on the basis of their academic ability and/or potential to succeed;

8.1.5   application and enrolment procedures give students the opportunity to identify any additional learning support available for their needs;

8.1.6   where assessment(s) form part of the application process for a particular course, all applicants will take the same assessment(s), with reasonable adjustments being made for identified additional learning needs;

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8.1.7 students are made aware, during induction, of the Equality and Diversity Policy and the behaviour expected of students

## 8.2 Students: Teaching and learning

UCQ will ensure that:

8.2.1 the range, content and delivery of the curriculum reflect the needs of students and the community and promote widening participation;

8.2.2 all aspects of teaching are sensitive to, and promote equality and diversity, including language used, timetabling, delivery methods, materials, group organisation and activities;

8.2.3 teaching and learning materials and delivery methods avoid stereotypes and bias, and promote the rich cultural diversity of the local community;

8.2.4 resources are available in formats appropriate to the needs of individual students, including the use of specialist equipment where appropriate;

8.2.5 equality and diversity and access for everyone to develop their potential are embedded in the teaching, learning and assessment strategy;

8.2.6 there is an ethos and learning environment which is inclusive and enables students to feel comfortable and valued as an individual.

## 8.3 Students: Support services and facilities

UCQ will:

8.3.1 provide a range of support services and facilities which will enable students with particular physical, social and cultural needs to participate fully in UCQ life, including:

- tutorial support
- additional support with learning, for example English and maths
- additional learning support, for example dyslexia screening
- financial and welfare advice
- personal counselling
- social, recreational and catering facilities
- prayer facilities;

8.3.2 ensure that its support services and facilities are publicised to students and potential applicants through recruitment and publicity materials, the UCQ website, the student handbook, and at induction;

8.3.3 seek to make continuous improvements to physical access to all of its buildings and make reasonable adjustments to ensure that students, staff and visitors with access requirements due to disability are not disadvantaged. For further information please refer to GP-011 Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

8.3.4 Ensure that services are tailored and regularly reviewed to include an understanding of the student's needs, backgrounds and differing requirements.

**8.4    Staff: Recruitment and selection**

UCQ will:

8.4.1    when a vacancy arises, prepare a person specification identifying the essential and desirable levels of qualifications/training, knowledge/experience and skills/abilities required for the job;

8.4.2    advertise jobs internally and/or externally to attract applicants who meet the person specification;

8.4.3    consider applicants on the basis of their suitability for the job and their ability to fulfil the requirements set out in the person specification.

**8.5    Staff: Training and development**

UCQ will:

8.5.1    identify annually training and development needs through the Staff Development and Performance Procedure (Appendix B of the Staff Handbook)

8.5.2    make available a range of training opportunities to meet these needs;

8.5.3    ensure staff undertake regular equality and diversity training

8.5.4    include equality and diversity training as part of the induction for new staff.

**8.6    Staff: Working environment**

UCQ will:

8.6.1    make reasonable adjustments to the premises or working arrangements to ensure that employees are not disadvantaged on the grounds of any protected characteristics. For further information please refer to GP-011 Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

# 9.   Reporting

9.1    UCQ has a complaints procedure for both staff and students.  Breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy will be dealt with through the complaints procedure.

# 10.   Monitoring

10.1    The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Academic Policy Committee on a yearly basis.  Appropriate data will be provided to the Academic Council, including numbers of complaints/incidents in relation to equality of opportunity.  Equality and diversity data will be reviewed at all levels in the organisation and equality objectives will be developed to address any issues of inequality and discrimination.