

RACE EQUALITY POLICY 2009 - 2012

Contents

	Vice Chancellor's Introduction
Section 1	Introduction
Section 2	Institutional context – race equality at the University: where are we now?
Section 3	Race equality within the University's core functions and activities
Section 4	The University's specific duties under the race equality legislation
Section 5	Commitments, roles and responsibilities
Section 6	Complaints
Section 7	Action plan

Vice Chancellor's introduction

As the University launches its new strategic plan, it is essential that all staff and students are aware of the value of creating an inclusive working environment where everyone is given the opportunity to realise their full potential.

We work within a highly competitive global higher education context and if we are to succeed at becoming world leaders we need to recruit and retain world-class professionals.

Having a diverse student body and workforce leads to creative thinking, pedagogic diversity, intellectual challenge and interdisciplinarity which have always been fundamental to a Sussex education and must remain so as we move forward.

Our Race, Gender and Disability Equality Schemes and Action Plans demonstrate the University's commitment to promoting equality, identifying areas for improvement and continually reviewing our processes and procedures.

As members of the University, we are all responsible for challenging discrimination and for creating a positive working environment to help achieve our goal of becoming an employer of choice for the employee of choice.

Michael Farthing
Vice Chancellor

Section 1: Introduction

This Race Equality Policy sets out the framework within which the University will prevent unlawful racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations across all activities. These three aspects reflect the University's General Duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000, and the University is committed to complying with both the letter and spirit of this legislation. However, it also recognises that race equality is an essential element of the institution's vision, irrespective of its legal obligations. **Equality and Diversity** are two of the University's core values, which will be promoted:

"by developing entry routes to the University based on educational merit and valuing the strength derived from contributions to our mission by people from different backgrounds, traditions, cultures and perspective"¹

Racial, ethnic and cultural diversity are important at the University because they contribute to an environment that offers the opportunity for staff and students to engage with varied perspectives and experiences. Recognition and appreciation of differences enhance the spirit of enquiry and help to create a dynamic learning environment. Staff and students cannot benefit from this unless race equality is a reality. In addition, the University has an important responsibility to build positive relationships among all staff and students, and with the wider local community. A discrimination-free environment and a positive approach to equality at the University will help prepare students to value and confidently take their place in a multicultural society. They will also support a motivated and productive workforce.

This Race Equality Policy sits alongside the University's Disability and Gender Equality Schemes and supports the overarching Equality and Diversity Policy. It also complements a number of institutional strategies, including the Teaching and Learning and Research Strategies which are underpinned by the principle of fairness in the educational experience.

¹ Strategic Plan (January 2009)
Race Equality Policy 2009 – 2011 – January 2009

Section 2: Institutional context – Race Equality at the University: where are we now?

The University produced its first Race Equality Policy in 2002 and its first Race Equality Action Plan in 2004.

Examples of recent race equality initiatives or achievements are:

- Revising the (i) governance, strategy and compliance, and (ii) staff and student consultation structures, for Equality and Diversity.
- Developing a Teaching and Learning Strategy for the University which includes within its stated values, a commitment to “attracting students of the highest calibre and from a diversity of backgrounds.”
- Developing a Code of Practice for the Research Assessment Exercise 2008 which included a procedure specifically designed to address equality issues.
- Developing and embedding staff and student equalities monitoring.
- Conducting an equality impact assessment of the new pay and grading structure introduced in the summer of 2007, which showed no systematic pattern of pay differential in relation to ethnicity.
- The results of the 2007 International Student Barometer survey, in which Sussex was voted second out of 56 institutions, with key features being a safe campus, a good host culture and a place to make friends.
- Developing an equality impact assessment process, and guidance for staff involved in carrying out assessments.
- Diversity Weeks and the “Sussex loves music, hates racism” concert in May 2008.
- Participating in Aimhigher Sussex.
- Sussex Education Access Scheme which predominantly targets London schools

In terms of current racial and ethnic diversity within the staff and student communities, statistics show that:

7.1% of our staff are from black and minority ethnic groups (October 2008). This is significantly higher than the BME density in the local population.

11.5% of our students are from black and minority ethnic groups (this is slightly below the UCAS regional target).

Analysis of statistical monitoring information will continue to inform the University's action to promote race equality.

The University is proud to be an international institution. The campus has over 2,300 international students from more than 100 countries, and teaching and research staff from 40 countries. The University is committed to supporting the needs of international staff and students through campus facilities and its welfare structure.

The University recognises that it must maintain its work to challenge racial prejudice, eliminate race discrimination and promote race equality and that these issues must remain high on the agenda.

Section 3: Race equality within the University's core functions and activities

The University is fully committed to race equality within all of its activities. The functions to which this Policy is particularly relevant are listed below. Moving forward from 2008, one of the key race equality priorities for the University will be to identify race equality goals associated with these functions.

Student recruitment and admissions

The University's admissions policy is to admit those applicants who demonstrate the potential to benefit from, and contribute to, University education and research, and who can show evidence of a broad background of learning. For some students this will be entirely in terms of public examinations taken at school or college. Many others will have a mixture of prior formal qualifications or relevant work or life experience.

The University is committed to continuing its efforts to recruit a diverse community of undergraduates by providing specific progression routes for identified groups, including those from the locality and region. Intake is dominated by the local region, where only 5% of the population belong to minority ethnic groups (Census 2001, South East Region), but the University is committed to widening participation and coordinates or actively participates in many widening participation programmes. The Sussex Education Access Scheme (SEAS) predominantly targets London schools, many of which have high proportions of BME students, with a significant number from ethnic groups which are nationally under-represented in higher education, namely Black-other, Pakistani and Bangladeshi.

Data on student applications, intake and progression is collected and analysed to identify any inequalities related to race, and is used to inform planning and decision-making in this area.

Curriculum, teaching and learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is informed by an understanding of equality and diversity, underpinned by awareness of race equality issues among academic staff. Where appropriate, race and diversity issues are reflected in course content, and delivery methods respond to and utilise student diversity for the benefit of individual students and groups. Assessment criteria are explicit and fair to all students and the University adopts an anonymous marking policy. Data on ethnic origin is collected and monitored in relation to student admissions, academic progress and outcomes.

Student guidance, support, facilities and services

Through consultation, in particular with minority ethnic staff and students, the University ensures that facilities and services are accessible to and appropriate for all racial groups, and that staff are able to support the delivery of services to an ethnically diverse student body.

Community, business and educational partnerships and links

The University is currently developing its Business and Community (or “Third Mission”) activities, and within this there is an explicit recognition of the importance of diversity and the role that the University can play in both preparing people for participation in civic life and in offering resources for intellectual and cultural enrichment.

In addition, the Widening Participation Team are involved in a number of outreach initiatives and strive to ensure that equality and diversity issues are fully considered in all activities.

The University also aims to support its partner institutions in the development of their equality and diversity policies.

Staff recruitment, employment and promotion

The University recognises that its staff are its key resource. Staff are appointed, trained, assessed, promoted and otherwise treated solely on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

The University encourages applications for employment from all racial groups and acts to ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are carried out consistently and fairly. Staff involved in these activities will be made aware of their responsibilities under this Policy.

Staff training and development

Through training or other development methods, the University will enable staff to understand and carry out their duties in accordance with this Policy. This will include training on equality impact assessment.

Access to all training and development opportunities will be fair, and will continue to be monitored by equalities categories, including ethnic origin.

Racial harassment

The University recognises the importance of creating and supporting respectful working and learning environments and that, should it occur, racial harassment must be challenged and eliminated. The University has a Prevention of Harassment and Bullying Policy, which includes racial harassment, and can be found at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/staffing/personnl/policies/harassment-policy.pdf>

The University will ensure that it actively implements and updates the Prevention of Harassment and Bullying Policy and makes staff aware of their rights and responsibilities, and of the procedures for dealing with harassment. Support and guidance is provided to staff and students who are concerned about harassment or bullying at the University through the Personnel Officers (staff) or Student Advisers (students).

Grievances and complaints

Complaints and grievance procedures are implemented fairly and monitored by reference to racial and other equality target groups.

Governance

The University's key decision makers understand and are committed to all Equality and Diversity policies, and key decisions take account of a diversity of views and experiences. The Vice-Chancellor and senior managers provide visible leadership in this area and ensure that race equality actions are implemented across the University. Internal resources and structures reflect the importance of race equality (and of the other equality strands) to the work of the institution.

The University Council is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the University meets all legislative requirements related to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, and that related procedures and policies are implemented and maintained.

Section 4: The University's specific duties under the race equality legislation

The University has specific duties placed on it by the Race Relations legislation, and will ensure that it takes all necessary steps to comply with these as follows:

Maintaining the Race Equality Policy

The Equality and Diversity Committee of Council is responsible for the review and regular maintenance of the Race Equality Policy. The Committee will ensure that the Policy is developed and implemented in line with the University's Strategic Plan, and other relevant policies and procedures. The Policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

To ensure that the Race Equality Policy continues to be relevant to the work of the University and that it reflects issues and priorities that are important to a range of stakeholders, regular consultation will take place, primarily through the Equality and Diversity Forum. Membership of this Forum includes staff and students from equality target groups, including people from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. As required, more targeted or specific consultation will also be conducted through relevant University Committees, the Trade Unions, the Students' Union, and other groups of staff or students.

Assessing the impact of the University's institutional policies on students and staff of different racial groups

The University has developed a formal and structured process through which the impact of new and existing policies on students and staff of different racial groups can be assessed, and through which opportunities to promote race equality can be identified. Impact assessments will therefore serve to provide a check that no group is disadvantaged by any University policy. The University will revise its policies in the light of impact assessments if necessary.

Monitoring

The University will continue to collect comprehensive data based on the CRE Amended Census 2001 monitoring categories. Information collected on an individual's ethnic origin will be collected solely for the purpose of monitoring equal opportunities, will be recorded in an anonymous way in any published reports, and kept confidential and protected from misuse. Internal data will be analysed to identify possible inequalities to enable us to investigate the underlying causes and identify steps which may eliminate inequalities. It will also be benchmarked against national population and staff and student data to inform planning and decision-making at the University.

Data on the numbers of staff, according to ethnic origin, will be collected and analysed under the following categories:

- Recruitment, including applications, appointments and types of contracts
- Career development and progress, including promotion and appraisal processes
- Staff development and training opportunities

- Grievances and disciplinarys, including incidents of racial harassment
- Termination of employment and staff turnover

Data on the numbers of students, according to ethnic origin, will be collected and analysed under the following categories:

- Student recruitment, i.e. applications and intake figures
- Progression
- Retention rates
- Choice of subject
- Education outcomes
- Academic appeals
- Incidents of racial harassment
- Student discipline and complaints cases
- First Destination Returns
- Student Experience surveys
- Hardship Fund applications

The latest staff and student monitoring information will be available on the HR and Equality and Diversity web pages during 2009.

The University will take steps to review and improve the quality, quantity and reliability of the data it collects on ethnicity.

Arrangements for publishing the Race Equality Policy, assessments and monitoring

The Race Equality Policy will be published widely within the University and will be accessible to external parties via the University's website. It will be made available to all new staff through the induction procedure and to students in the Student Handbook. The Policy will be advertised in University newsletters and via the staff and student pages of the University's website.

The results of monitoring and assessment will be published in an annual Equal Opportunities Report which will be presented to the Equality and Diversity Committee of Council and other relevant committees, and this Report will include an outline of the key areas for action for the forthcoming year based on this data.

Section 5: Commitments, roles and responsibilities

The University Council is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the University meets all legislative requirements related to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, and that related procedures and policies are implemented and maintained.

The Vice-Chancellor will ensure that general awareness of this Policy is promoted within the University.

The Equality and Diversity Committee of Council, lead by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor, is responsible for co-ordinating all work related to racial equality.

The implementation of this Policy is the responsibility of all staff and students as part of their normal activities as members of an academic and social community. All staff and students will therefore be made aware of their obligation to adhere to the Policy and to the principles of diversity and promoting good race relations. In practical terms, this policy means that everyone associated with the University must treat others fairly and with respect.

Senior managers, including heads of academic schools and professional services are responsible for ensuring that the Policy is put into practice within their areas and for making sure that staff understand their responsibilities.

The University will make use of its links in the local and wider education, business and other communities to promote good practice in racial equality and to encourage others to deal with the problems and effects of race discrimination.

Section 6: Complaints

Discriminatory behaviour towards a person on the grounds of race is unlawful. Deliberate acts of discrimination on racial grounds will be treated as disciplinary offences and dealt with in accordance with the University's Staff and Student Disciplinary Procedures.

Staff who feel that they have not been treated fairly and equitably in accordance with this Policy should initially bring this to the attention of their manager and/or their Personnel Officer. If the situation is not satisfactorily resolved, they may pursue a formal complaint in accordance with the University's Grievance Procedure available on the Human Resources website at: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/staffing/personnl/union/griev_proc.pdf, and the Policy to Prevent Harassment and Bullying at Work can be found at: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/staffing/personnl/policies/harassment-policy.pdf>. Any claims of harassment should initially be dealt with under the University's Harassment Policy.

Students who feel that they have not been treated fairly and equitably in accordance with this Policy may pursue a complaint in accordance with the University's Student Complaints Procedure. This procedure includes first steps and informal solutions and is available at: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/secretariat/policy/stu-complaint.shtml>

Further informal advice can be sought from the Personnel Officer for your School/Unit in the case of staff, or the Student Advice Centre (1st Floor Falmer House, <http://www.ussu.info/>) or Student Advisers in Schools in the case of students.

Section 7: Action Plan

The action plan is a key element of the Race Equality Policy and sets out how the University intends to meet its race objectives and comply with its general duty to promote race equality.

The action plan covers the three year period of the Policy, but will be reviewed and reported on annually and updated accordingly.

January 2009