

# Equality and Diversity

## 1. Policy

The University of Sussex is committed to promoting equality and diversity, providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all. In the implementation of this policy the University will:

- ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race<sup>1</sup>, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, trade union membership or non-membership, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction.
- promote diversity and equality for students and staff and value the contributions made by individuals and groups of people from diverse cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and distinctive backgrounds.
- promote and sustain an inclusive and supportive study and work environment which affirms the equal and fair treatment of individuals in fulfilling their potential and does not afford unfair privilege to any individual or group.
- treat part time staff and students fairly and equally.
- challenge inequality and less favourable treatment and wherever practicable.
- ensure individuals experience a level playing field for achieving opportunities.
- promote greater participation of under-represented groups of students and staff by encouraging positive action to address inequality.
- promote an environment free of harassment and bullying on any grounds in relation to all staff, students, and visitors.

## 2. Responsibilities

The Pro-Vice Chancellor with responsibility for equalities issues will, as Chair of the Equality and Diversity Committee, oversee the implementation of this policy.

The Equality and Diversity Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of all equal opportunities policies and procedures and reporting on the progress made in achieving equalities targets to Senate and Council. The following areas of commitment are most relevant to students:

### (i) Monitoring

Regular monitoring will be undertaken in respect of gender, age, race/ethnicity and disability in relation to admissions, course documentation, retention, progression, degree outcomes, first destination, complaints, appeals and harassment cases in order to help identify and thus address any unjustified less favourable treatment and/or inequality.

### (ii) Admissions

The University welcomes applications from students irrespective of background. Specific

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<sup>1</sup> Race is defined in law as including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin

positive action measures may be put in place for particular groups that are underrepresented, such as disabled students and those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

(iii) Widening Participation

The University will maintain and review its Widening Participation strategy, seeking to attract and support students from disadvantaged socio-economic, black and minority ethnic and other diverse backgrounds.

(iv) Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Schools and Departments have equality and diversity objectives as part of their overall plans. Subject and curriculum development will take account of equalities issues where relevant; specifically in relation to race, cultural and religious diversity, disability, gender and sexual orientation. Teaching faculty will have staff development support in this area.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to assessment methods to meet the needs of disabled students and those from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds.

### 3. Related Policies

All University policies and procedures will be reviewed to ensure that they comply with the Equality and Diversity policy. The following directly relevant policies and procedures support the University's implementation process:

- Race Equality Policy and Action Plan
- Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Disability Policy
- Harassment and Bullying Policy

October 2006

Updated February 2011 in accordance with the Equality Act 2010