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Equality and Diversity Policy and its implementation

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 Bournemouth University (BU) aims to create a work and study environment for students, staff and visitors to BU where different values and beliefs can be freely expressed and openly discussed and will do what it can to encourage open and respectful debate around equality and diversity issues.
- 1.2 Inclusivity is one of our core values that underpins all that we do at BU and cuts across all of our activities. We are proud of our increasingly diverse community and work to take action to address gaps and challenges in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in order to support development, progression and achievement for all.
- 1.3 This policy has been created in response to the Equality Act (2010) and earlier equality legislation to which the University is required to respond as a public sector body.
- 1.4 The University is strongly committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination in any form under the Equality Act (2010). It is also focussed on advancing equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between all students, staff and visitors to BU.
- 1.5 BU will not tolerate unfair or unlawful treatment on grounds of the following characteristics:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity (including Paternity)
 - Race (colour, ethnic or national background)
 - Religion or Belief (including lack of belief)
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation

In addition to the above this policy also covers:

- Trade union membership activity
- Political belief

2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Everyone in the BU community (students, staff, board members, contractors and visitors) has Equality and Diversity responsibilities.
- 2.2 The Chief Operating Officer has executive responsibility for Equality and Diversity matters at BU.

- 2.3 The Equality and Diversity Committee which is led by a member of the University Leadership Team. This individual has overall responsibility for developing and embedding BU's strategic commitment to Dignity, Diversity and Equality.
- 2.4 The Equality and Diversity Adviser has overall responsibility for the daily operation of this policy, as well as ensuring that the university is complying with statutory duties under existing equality legislation and relevant codes of practice.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 For the purpose of this policy BU defines:
- **Dignity** as respecting all individuals who study or work at or visit the university
 - **Diversity** as recognising, respecting and valuing people's differences, to enable people to realise their full potential in constructively contributing to BU's inclusive campus culture for all staff, students and members of the community.
 - **Equality** as ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their time whilst studying, working or visiting BU.

4. LINKS TO OTHER UNIVERSITY DOCUMENTS

- 4.1 There are a number of policies, procedures and codes of practice that sit alongside this policy including:
- Access and Participation plan
 - Dignity and Respect (Harassment) Policy and Procedures
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Equality Analysis Procedure
 - Hate Crime Policy
 - Prevent Policy

- 4.2 Information about the Legal framework can be found in Appendix 1.

5. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 5.1 Specific implementation and monitoring responsibilities for Equality and Diversity lie with the:

- Finance and Resources Committee
- Academic Standards and Education Committee
- University Executive Team
- University Leadership Team
- Equality and Diversity Committee

- 5.2 BU undertakes an equality analysis on all relevant policies and activities as a means of identifying any potential impact.

- 5.3 BU will make reasonable adjustments for students, staff and visitors with disabilities, in accordance with identified needs.

- 5.4 Publication and dissemination of appropriate student, staff and community data relating to equality and diversity matters, alongside identification of relevant actions.

- 5.5 All managers are responsible for:
- setting a good example by treating all members of BU according to the principles outlined in this policy

- correcting unacceptable behaviour
- ensuring staff and students know how to report any forms of discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation
- ensuring that staff and students are encouraged and enabled to reach their full potential through promoting an inclusive study and work environment
- developing a culture in which the principles of this policy are embedded into their work areas
- identifying appropriate staff development to meet the needs of their respective areas

5.6 All BU students, staff and contractors have a responsibility to:

- uphold the principles of this and other relevant Equality and Diversity policies
- contribute to a safe and inclusive environment that celebrates Equality and Diversity
- challenge unacceptable behaviour or any discrimination
- report unacceptable behaviour

5.7 All visitors to BU are responsible for upholding the principles of this policy and contributing to a safe and inclusive environment that celebrates Equality and Diversity.

5.8 A student or staff member who wishes to make a complaint about discrimination, harassment or victimisation should refer to the [Dignity and Respect \(Harassment\) Policy and Procedures](#). In addressing harassment, we will refer to internationally recognised definitions, including the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism, which is that “Antisemitism is 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.”

Racial harassment can be aimed at any race or ethnicity and the university is committed to addressing all racial harassment including, but not limited to:

- Anti-semitism – defined as offensive actions or statements fuelled by prejudice or stereotyping of Jewish people. The IHRA definition is “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.

5.9 Members of the community who wish to make a complaint about discrimination, harassment or victimisation should put the complaint in writing to either the Head of External Engagement or the Director of Student Services.

5.10 A programme of work is set annually and is incorporated in the annual Equality and Diversity report which responds to our legal duties.

5.11 An Equality and Diversity report is produced annually. This work outlines how BU has responded to the legislative duties and outlines impact. The report is presented to the University Leadership Team and the Board via its sub-committees.

6. EQUALITY CHARTERS AND COMMITMENTS

6.1 BU is committed to ensuring best practice and being recognised with the very best organisations and as a result has signed up to a number of [equality charter marks and](#)

[commitments](#) to further progress its commitment to being inclusive . The university is a member of the following charter marks and commitments:

- AccessAble
- Athena SWAN charter (AdvanceHE)
- Business Disability Forum
- Disability Confident
- Mindful Employer
- Race Equality charter (AdvanceHE)
- Stonewall Diversity Champion

7. AWARENESS AND DEVELOPMENT (ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS)

7.1 In order to embed the principles of Equality and Diversity, a programme of support activities is available to students, staff and the wider community. This is achieved by marking national Equality and Diversity events and other celebratory activities towards which faculties, professional services and the Students' Union are expected to contribute.

7.2 An annual programme of development events is available to all students and staff whether the event is provided by the university or the Students Union (SUBU)

8. SUPPORT

8.1 Support for staff:

- Dignity and Wellbeing Advisers
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Human Resource
- Line manager or any senior manager within BU
- Trade union
- Health and Safety (including the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Adviser)

8.2 Support for students and staff:

- Equality and Diversity Adviser
- Faith and Reflection

8.3 **Support for students:**

- Academic Adviser
- Additional Learning Support
- AskBU
- Programme Leader/Framework Co-ordinator
- Programmes Support Officer
- Students Union Advice Centre
- Student Wellbeing
- Student Support and Engagement Team

Appendix 1: Legal framework

- The Equality Act came into force in October 2010 and replaced previous equality legislation. Sections of the Act apply to the provision of goods, facilities and services, premises, employment and education. The Equality Act outlines nine grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. These are known as ‘protected characteristics’ and they are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

- **Discrimination**

Direct discrimination is defined as treating one person less favourably than another, because of a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by association is a type of direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by perception is a type of direct discrimination against someone who is perceived to have a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination is when a provision, criterion or practice is applied, which particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified, if it can be shown to be a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.

Discrimination arising from a disability is when someone is treated unfavourably because of something arising as a consequence of their disability. This type of discrimination can be justified, if it can be shown to be a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for a person, or violating a person’s dignity. There is more information about harassment in the University’s [Dignity and Respect \(Harassment\) Policy and Procedures](#).

- **Victimisation**

Victimisation is defined as treating a person less favourably because they have complained about discrimination or harassment, or helped someone else to do so.

- **Positive Action**

The Act allows for “positive action” measures to be taken to help overcome disadvantage. Positive action can be taken in relation to employment as well as for students. Adopting positive action is voluntary and

can help alleviate disadvantage experienced by people who share a protected characteristic, reduce underrepresentation in relation to particular activities, and meet particular needs

- **Reasonable adjustments**

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty upon higher education institutions to make reasonable adjustments for staff, students and service users in relation to:

- provisions, criteria or practices
- physical features
- auxiliary aids

These adjustments apply where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to non-disabled people.

- **Public Sector Equality Duty**

BU is a public body and as such is subject to, and compliant with, the Public Sector Equality Duty. This is defined as the general duty which is supported by specific duties. The general duty requires the University to have “due regard” to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

There is no prescribed process on how to demonstrate due regard.

The specific duties require BU to:

- publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the equality duty. Information should be published every 12 months.
- prepare or publish equality objectives and last for 4 years.
- publish information and objectives in a manner that is accessible to the public.