

## Equality and Diversity Policy

***This policy does not form part of employee's contract of employment and may reviewed and amended subject to agreement by all relevant parties.***

***This policy must be read in conjunction with the Code of Practice which overarches all the University's policies and procedures and details generic aspects that apply to all of our policies and procedures***

### Introduction

Edge Hill University is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected.

As a provider of employment and education, we value the diversity of our staff and students. We are committed to providing a fair, equitable and mutually supportive learning and working environment for our students and staff, and this is reflected in the core values of the University as set out in our Vision and People Strategy.

The University recognises that equality should be embedded in all its activities and will seek to promote awareness of equality and adopt good practice.

In exercising its policies, practices, procedures and other functions, the University will have due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and to the protected characteristics specified within it, as well as other relevant circumstances including parental or caring responsibilities, contract type, and working hours.

### Commitments

The University aims to demonstrate its commitment to equality and diversity through providing equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of:

- age

- disability
- ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality)
- gender (including gender reassignment , marital status, pregnancy or maternity)
- religion, belief
- sexual orientation (including civil partnership status)

The University will deliver these commitments by:

- Valuing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity for all.
- Promoting respect and encouraging good relations within and between groups.
- Aiming to meet the different needs of different groups, as appropriate, whilst promoting shared values.
- Promoting an inclusive and amicable place of work and study where there is mutual respect and where harassment and bullying, intimidation or violence is not tolerated.
- Preventing unlawful discrimination and victimisation.
- Fulfilling its legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice.
- Addressing any breaches of this policy.

## **Application**

The University will apply the Equality and Diversity Policy to all areas of employment including:

- Recruitment and selection of staff.
- Promotion opportunities.
- Evaluation of roles and grading.
- Training and development opportunities.
- All University policies and procedures.

## **Implementation**

The University community as a whole, shares responsibility for the successful application of this policy, whilst specific responsibility falls on managers and those who are professionally involved in staff and student support, development and supervision.

## **Role and Responsibilities**

The Board of Governors have ultimate accountability for compliance with the University's equality obligations. The practical application of the policy rests with senior managers, including the Vice-Chancellor, the Academic Registrar, Academic Heads and Directors.

## **Managers**

For the purposes of this policy a manager is defined as any individual who has a responsibility for the management, supervision or direction of University staff or is responsible for the supervision, delivery or control of any aspect of the University's business. Managers should:

- Ensure that the Policy is effectively communicated, understood and implemented.
- Encourage staff to report any breaches of the Policy and investigate using the appropriate University procedures.
- Provide awareness opportunities for staff and positively encourage staff to engage in staff development to enable them to fulfil their responsibility under this Policy.
- Ensure equality and diversity principles are actively applied to all University services, processes and procedures with staff, students, visitors, clients, partners and the recruitment of external agencies.
- Be aware of the impact of University policies upon different groups.

## **All Staff**

Should:

- Promote and abide by the Equality and Diversity Policy and supporting Codes of Practice.

- Ensure that staff, students, visitors and applicants to the University receive equality of opportunity.
- Value differences and treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Ensure that the Policy is effectively communicated, understood and implemented to fellow colleagues, students, visitors, clients, partners and external agencies.
- Report any breaches of the Policy using the appropriate University procedures.
- Actively engage in staff development to be able to fulfil the responsibilities of this Policy.
- Be aware of the impact of University policies upon different groups and notify your line manager where there is evidence of potential discrimination.

### **Other parties involved in the undertaking of University business**

For Example, Visitors / Clients / Partners / Service Providers / (please note this is not an exhaustive list) should:

- Promote and abide by the University's Equality and Diversity Policy and supporting Codes of Practice.
- Ensure that employees or students of the University receive equality of opportunity.
- Value differences and treat everyone with dignity and respect.

### **Breaches of Policy**

Contravention of this policy will be considered a serious disciplinary matter that could potentially, in some cases, amount to gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.

Staff should note that under the law on discrimination, they can be held personally liable for an unlawful act of discrimination against a fellow member of staff or a job applicant and that an employment tribunal application may be brought against them personally as well as against the employer. A person can be found to have discriminated against another even though they may not have intended to discriminate.

## **Complaints**

A member of staff who has any concerns about the implementation of this policy, or who feels that they may have been disadvantaged, discriminated against, harassed or victimised, should initially raise this with their line manager or HR Staff Adviser.

## **Monitoring and Review**

- The University will maintain appropriate staff information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of this policy. This information will be treated sensitively and in accordance with the University's data protection policy.
- The effectiveness of this policy will be kept under review and amended to reflect developments in equality legislation and best practice.

March 2015

Next Review Date February 2018