

## Equality and Diversity Policy

### 1 Introduction

Queen's University Belfast is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and to creating and sustaining an environment that values and celebrates the diversity of its staff and student body, in pursuance of the principle of equality of opportunity which was enshrined in the University's Charter of 1908.

### 2 Policy Statement

2.1 The University values and promotes equality and diversity and will seek to ensure that it treats all individuals fairly and with dignity and respect. It is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

2.2 The University seeks to provide equality to all, irrespective of: gender, including gender re-assignment; marital or civil partnership status; having or not having dependants; religious belief or political opinion; race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, including Irish Travellers); disability; sexual orientation and age.

2.3 This policy applies to:

- (i) all applicants for employment, employees and all those who work for the University (including members of Senate and its core committees) and relates to all decisions in respect of recruitment and selection, promotion, access to training and the provision of terms and conditions of employment; and
- (ii) all student applicants and potential applicants and relates to all decisions in respect of the admission of students and the provision of all services to students including teaching and supervision, assessment, progression and award, and support services.

2.4 The policy is reflective of the University's commitment to develop fully and utilise the talents of all its staff and students.

### 3 Commitment to policy

3.1 The University is committed to:

- actively promoting equality of opportunity and to respecting and celebrating the cultural diversity within the University;
- promoting a good and harmonious environment free from flags, emblems, posters, graffiti or other material or actions or language likely to be provocative, offensive or intimidatory;
- fulfilling its legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice; and
- taking lawful affirmative and positive action, where appropriate.

#### 4 Status of the Policy

- 4.1 This policy forms part of the formal contract of employment for staff and part of the agreement between students and the University.
- 4.2 Breaches of the policy will be regarded as misconduct and may lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- 4.3 All visitors to the University will be expected to comply with the policy.
- 4.4 Those contracted to work at or for the University, including sub contractors, will be expected to comply with the policy. Breach of the policy could result in the termination of the contract.

#### 5 Implementation

- 5.1 The Senate of the University has ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy. The practical application of the policy rests with senior managers, including the President and Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer, the Deans, Heads of School and Directors.
- 5.2 The Director of Academic and Student Affairs is responsible for ensuring that student-related issues are effectively addressed. The Director of Human Resources, in conjunction with the Head of Diversity and Inclusion, is responsible for ensuring that staff-related issues are effectively addressed.
- 5.3 While senior managers and student sabbatical officers have a particular responsibility for ensuring compliance, all members of the University, including students and staff, must abide by it.
- 5.4 In order to implement this policy the University will:
  - communicate the policy to employees, applicants for employment, those working for the University, students and those applying to study at the University;
  - incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equality and diversity policy into job descriptions and work objectives of staff;
  - provide equality and diversity training and guidance for staff as appropriate, including training on induction and management courses;
  - advise all students of their responsibilities to the University and to other students in relation to this policy;
  - ensure that those who are involved in recruitment and selection exercises are trained in non-discriminatory selection techniques;
  - facilitate those cultural expressions which represent the diverse identities of groups, in a manner which is inclusive and celebratory, and non-triumphalist;
  - obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as subcontractors or agencies that they too will comply with the Equality and Diversity Policy in their dealings with the University and its staff and students;

- take appropriate lawful affirmative or positive action, for example, including statements in job advertisements encouraging members of under-represented groups to apply and developing specific outreach programmes; and

- ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of this policy.

## 6 Monitoring and Review

6.1 The University will maintain appropriate staff and student information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of this policy.

6.2 Information relating to applicants for employment and staff will be monitored by the University's Diversity and Inclusion Unit and information relating to student applicants and students will be monitored by the University's Planning Office.

6.3 All such information will be treated sensitively and in accordance with the University's data protection policy.

6.4 The effectiveness of this policy will be kept under review and amended to reflect developments in equality legislation and best practice.

6.5 The University will consult with the recognised trade unions, the Students' Union and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland with respect to this policy.

## 7 Complaints

7.1 Members of staff who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure. A copy of the procedures are available at <http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/HumanResources/Diversity/> or in hard copy or alternative formats, such as enlarged print, in Braille, audio technology, on request from the Diversity and Inclusion Unit.

7.2 Students who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the Student Complaints Procedure. A copy of this procedure is available at [www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/Publications/DASAPoliciesandProceduresManual/](http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/Publications/DASAPoliciesandProceduresManual/) or in hard copy or alternative formats, such as enlarged print, in Braille, audio technology, on request from Academic Affairs.

7.3 Every effort will be made to ensure that any person making a complaint will not be victimised. All complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be dealt with promptly and confidentially. If on investigation, it is established that discrimination, victimisation or harassment has occurred, disciplinary action will result and may warrant dismissal/expulsion.

*Approved by Senate 24 June 2008*