Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

INTRODUCTION
Policy Statement

1. The university is committed to providing a vibrant, ethical, and sustainable working environment that values equality and diversity and promotes inclusion. This commitment exists alongside our wider legal and moral obligations to provide an inclusive environment for our staff, students, and members of the public. The University does not accept discrimination and takes its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 seriously.

Purpose and Scope

2. This policy sets out our responsibilities under the Public Sector Duty required by the Equality Act 2010 where Public Bodies must have "due regard" to:

   (a) Eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.
   (b) Advance equality and diversity; and
   (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

   The duty to ensure that 'due regard' is demonstrated means that university as a public body must:

   (a) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people because of any of the protected characteristics.
   (b) Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; and
   (c) We encourage and support people who have protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the University will publish:

   a) Equality objectives, at least every four years.
   b) Information to demonstrate compliance with the public sector equality duty.

3. This policy is supported by the university's equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) framework which includes the institutional equality objectives. This framework sets out the university's commitment to EDI.

Application

4. This policy applies to all colleagues of the University, this includes all individuals working within the University at all levels and grades, including officers, employees (whether permanent, fixed term or temporary), workers, trainees, seconded staff, agency staff, volunteers, interns, or any other person working in any context within the University.

5. This policy also applies to all of the University's students.

6. This policy also extends to individuals performing services for or on behalf of the University which may include governors, University subsidiaries, recipients of grants, partners, collaborative arrangements, joint ventures, agents, and advisors.

DEFINITIONS

Equality
The term equality refers to the state of being equal in status, rights, and opportunities. This also means protecting people from being discriminated against.

Equity
The term equity refers to the provision of specific interventions to ensure fair and equal processes and outcomes. For example, different levels of support and assistance depending on specific needs of individuals or communities.

The Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act

7. The Equality Act 2010 recognises the following protected characteristics:

    (a) Age
    (b) Disability
    (c) Gender reassignment
    (d) Marriage and civil partnership
    (e) Pregnancy and maternity
    (f) Race
    (g) Religion or belief
    (h) Sex
    (i) Sexual orientation.

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

Conducting an EIA is not a legal requirement, but it is an established and credible tool for demonstrating that due regard has been given to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

The intended purpose of an EIA is to assist an organisation in mitigating against direct and indirect discrimination that could have the potential to disadvantage employees, customers/service users or third parties. When implemented correctly, an EIA is used to improve outcomes in business planning and service delivery.

For most public bodies in England, EIAs are generally conducted in the following circumstances.

    a) When there is a proposed change to service provision (including a new service or activity being launched, or a service being discontinued).
    b) When the need for a management of change process arises and there is redeployment and/or risk of redundancy for employees (impacting 10 or more employees).
    c) When a new policy is developed, or an existing policy is reviewed and updated.

Separate guidance on how to apply equality analysis to decision making is maintained by the EDI Team to support colleagues with decision-making responsibilities.

RESPONSIBILITIES

8. **All Colleagues** are responsible for:

    (a) Ensuring that they have read, understood, and comply with this policy and the institutional equality objectives described within the University's EDI framework.
    (b) Contributing to a culture that is inclusive and equitable.
    (c) Assisting with investigations in relation to discrimination, bullying, harassment, or sexual misconduct.
    (d) Completing mandatory training as required relating to EDI.
    (e) Contributing to an inclusive work environment by demonstrating the University's values.
    (f) Reporting any witnessed or suspected incidents of discrimination, harassment or victimisation through the University's Support Report Respect online tool, or by contacting one of the people listed in the useful links section of this policy for support, advice, or alternatively challenge inappropriate behaviour safely (using Active Bystander approaches).

9. **Managers** are additionally responsible for:

(a) Ensuring that the colleagues that they manage are aware of this policy.

(b) Ensuring that the colleagues that they complete mandatory training, where required to do so, relating to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

(c) Conducting Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) in their work areas to identify opportunities to promote equitable outcomes and mitigate against potential adverse impact.

(d) Encouraging the creation of an inclusive work environment as a role model, by demonstrating the University's values.

10. **Students** are responsible for:

(a) Abiding by the aims and contents of this policy statement;

(b) Complying with the standards of conduct set out in the Student Code of Conduct;

(c) Contributing to an inclusive culture which celebrates diversity, and where everyone is treated with dignity and respect;

(d) Reporting any witnessed or suspected incidents of discrimination, harassment or victimisation through the University's [Support Report Respect](#) online tool, or by contacting one of the people listed in the useful links section of this policy for support, advice, or alternatively challenge inappropriate behaviour safely (using Active Bystander approaches).

11. **The Strategic Insights and Business Analysis (SIBA)** service is responsible for student equality monitoring data.

12. **Human Resources (HR)** is responsible for employee equality monitoring data.

13. The **Executive Director of Human Resources** is responsible for helping establish a positive equality, diversity, and inclusion culture. This includes maintaining an effective central support team for the provision of equality, diversity and inclusion support and guidance to the University, as well as the publication of equality monitoring data reports.

14. The **Director of Library and Student Services** is responsible for helping establish and maintain equitable student services.

15. **Deans of Schools** are responsible for helping establish a positive equality, diversity, and inclusion culture for their students.

16. The **Finance, Staffing & Resources Committee** is responsible for approving any proposed changes to the policy.

References and Associated Documentation (Legislation, Other Policies, other parties)

17. This policy forms the foundation of our institutional equality objectives and is linked to our EDI Framework.

18. This policy supports the University's zero tolerance approach to modern slavery through clear responsibilities for all colleagues and managers to contribute to a culture that is inclusive and equitable.

19. This policy is linked to other University policies;

    [Addressing and Preventing Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)
    [Equal Pay Policy](#)
    [HR Policies and Procedures, including Recruitment and Selection](#)
    [Student Code of Conduct](#)
    [Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement](#)

Freedom of Speech and Expression

20. One of the University's core values is upholding freedom of speech, academic freedom and freedom from discrimination, in order to provide and encourage a supportive environment and infrastructure that promotes expression, debate and deliberations of all ideas and for peaceful protests within the law.

    The University will take all steps as are reasonably practicable (both taking positive steps and refraining from taking steps which could have an adverse impact) to ensure that freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law is protected and promoted:
    o Promoting a culture of tolerance and respect for others, encouraging dialogue about the issues that connect and divide individuals and communities, discussing prejudice and challenging preconceptions and assumptions;
    o Creating an environment for staff and students free from intimidation and harassment, tackling hate crime, challenging views that promote violence or otherwise infringe human rights without restricting lawful free speech; and
    o Providing opportunities to learn about difference and identify common ground, promoting the benefits of developing knowledge and skills that improve personal and communal relationships.

21. The University will ensure that all staff are able to exercise freedom of speech within the law, without placing themselves at risk of losing their job, any University privileges or benefits they have, or securing promotion or different jobs at the University.

    The [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#) sets out the University's values and expectations in relation to freedom of speech).

OPERATION APPLICATION

The EDI Team is responsible for:

a) ensuring that the policy is communicated, maintained and reviewed at appropriate intervals;
b) overseeing the implementation of the EDI Framework; and
c) ensuring compliance with the PSED.

POLICY MANAGEMENT

Dissemination

22. Further information relating to EDI is available on our [webpage here](#).

23. EDI learning and development resources for colleagues can be accessed via the [MyDevelopment platform here.](#)

Monitoring

24. The university's EDI Committee is responsible for the monitoring of compliance to measure the effectiveness of the equality objectives. It will do this by examining information from a range of sources, including colleague data and student data, survey results and Equality Impact Assessments, as well as sector benchmarking.

    Information about the EDI Committee and its meeting minutes can be accessed on our [webpage here](#).

25. The university will actively consult with its diverse communities of colleagues and students on equality and diversity matters through the Equality and Diversity Committee, our equality networks and the Students' Union.

26. Breaches of this policy will be investigated and may be treated as a disciplinary offence under the University's disciplinary rules and procedures.

27. Equality monitoring data relating to students and colleagues will be managed in accordance with our record keeping requirements.

Policy Review

28. The central EDI Team is responsible for conducting a review of this Policy every three years. An earlier unscheduled review may be implemented if matters raised under the policy require amendment. Amendments to this policy will be approved by the Finance, Staffing & Resources Committee.

Executive Summary

Equality, diversity, and inclusion is integral to our university values. Further guidance is available online at www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/500.html?aspxerrorpath=/our-university/equality-and-inclusion/

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A PDF copy of the final approved version should be forwarded to governance@leedsbeckett.ac.uk for inclusion in the policy register and consideration to the Publication Scheme. The original master copy should be retained on file by the policy owner.