

London South Bank University

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Introduction

London South Bank University is committed to the provision of equality for all, valuing diversity across all the dimensions of difference. This is set out in the University's Equality and Diversity Policy Statement.

In the furtherance of this objective, the University has developed this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy including procedures to be followed in implementing them, to ensure everyone who studies and works here does so free of discrimination.

This document was first produced in 1996 with full consultation with staff, students and trade unions. Copies were circulated to all staff and also made available to students via the Student Union as well as making reference to it in the Student Handbook. The document was revised in October 2000 and again in May 2002, the latter to take account of changes in legislation with the introduction of the Race Relations (Amendments) Act (2000) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001). This version was updated in 2013 to reflect and include the Equality Act 2010. This new 2015 version reflects the changing equality, diversity and inclusion landscape in relation to trans people and bisexuals.

This version of the document includes legislation on the nine 'protected characteristics' and is available on the University's website.

Vision, Aim and Approach

Our Vision

We are a unique educational institution that is proactively committed to creating a stimulating teaching and learning environment that values diversity, fairness, mutual respect and inclusion. We are dedicated to realising the potential of our staff, students and local community we believe that diversity enriches our individual and collective experience, performance and achievement.

Our Aim

Our aim is to set objectives, milestones and targets to:

- Develop diversity and inclusion as a widely recognised area of competitive strength.
- Effectively integrate and mainstream diversity and equality into our corporate strategies, policies, academic curriculum, teaching delivery, assessment methods, learning environment and management practice.
- Continue to be at the forefront of the access and widening participation agenda.
- Create an inclusive environment where differences are celebrated and everyone is valued and respected.

The drive and commitment to diversity and equality at the University will ensure that:

- We are adequately equipped to meet the diverse needs and aspirations of staff, students and wider community.
- We create an inclusive environment that promotes dignity at work and mutual respect.
- We set the standard within higher education and are recognised as an example of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) good practice.

The University is committed to equality of opportunity both as an education institution and as an employer. Equality of opportunity means working to ensure that no student or member of staff receives less favourable treatment on the basis of their 'protected characteristics'. This means on the grounds of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief (or no belief); sex; sexual orientation.

In complying with the Equality Act 2010, the University will:

- Promote good relations among its staff and students and will create conditions which contribute to the full development and potential of everyone.
- Create a climate where staff and students are given confidence to challenge acts and behaviour which contravene the University's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy and the law.
- Treat fairly and appropriately each job applicant, course assessment, progression or promotion decisions at the University.

Definitions

- Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and has the same opportunity to fulfil their potential. Equality is backed by legislation designed to address unfair discrimination based on membership of a particular protected group.
- Diversity comprises of a mosaic of people from all walks of life, who bring a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs as assets to all those with whom they interact.
- Inclusion is the complete acceptance and integration of all students and employees regardless of diversity background that proactively leads to a sense of belonging, engagement and full participation within and across the University.

Legislation

The majority of the Equality Act provisions became law in October 2010. It replaces previous legislation (such as the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and ensures consistency in what public sector organisations need to do to make the workplace a fair environment and to comply with the law.

The Act is intended to simplify, strengthen and harmonise the current legislation and to provide the UK with a new discrimination law that protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The Act streamlines discrimination law, making it easier for people to understand their rights and responsibilities. In addition, the Act contains wide positive action provisions which offer special encouragement to those from disproportionately under-represented or otherwise disadvantaged groups.

The nine main pieces of legislation that have merged are:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief (or no belief); sex; or sexual orientation.

Other Key Provisions of the Equality Act

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires Universities to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Positive Action provisions also permit the University to take proportionate action to overcome disadvantage, meet needs and tackle under-representation.

Our Approach

We have adopted a comprehensive approach that seeks to embed equality, value the multiple dimensions of diversity and mainstream inclusion. This means that we are committed to ensuring that this agenda is fundamental to the development and delivery of our policies and effectively integrated into the very fabric of our professional practice and service delivery.

Leadership and Management

The University's Board of Governors, Executive Team, and the Leadership Forum will set the pace providing leadership at all levels to champion equality, diversity and inclusion, monitor progress against planned activities and respond effectively to the University's statutory requirements and legal obligations.

Access and Inclusive Learning

The University will provide an accessible environment for people with disabilities and from different cultures to study and work. Applications from groups currently under-represented in higher education will be positively encouraged.

Staff Development and Training

Equality, diversity and inclusion training in relation to legislation, employment, leadership, the student experience; cultural competence and how to put equality and the core principles of diversity into practice will be provided for all employees.

In accordance with the Equality Act, positive action may be used as a vehicle to address under-representation. All employees will be given access to staff development, and where appropriate additional development, to enable them to fulfil their potential and to progress within the organisation.

Curriculum and Skills Development

Students will be educated for life and work in a global, multi-cultural society. The University will promote understanding, pay due regard and respect for all cultures. All students will be given the opportunity to develop further their skills to enhance their employability and progression opportunities when leaving the University.

The Student Experience

The University is committed to:

- Ensuring and promoting equality through teaching and learning, and also in the selection, enrolment, assessment and progression of students.
- Providing appropriate student support and guidance which reflects the diversity of students' needs both pre-entry and on-course.

This means that no student will receive less favourable treatment on the basis of their protected characteristics. Support and guidance for students will be linked to their particular needs. It also means the University aims to promote equal respect for all people, to challenge prejudice and to prepare students to work in a multicultural and diverse society.

Selection, assessment and progression will be kept under review to ensure that individuals are selected and treated only on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

Publicity and Promotions Policies

The University seeks to ensure that publicity and promotion practices encourage applicants from under-represented groups. There is careful scrutiny of publicity and promotion materials and marketing related activities to ensure that brochures, advertisements, applications forms and display materials reflect the diversity of students at the University.

This means materials do not contain socially, racially biased or stereotypical terminology, information or illustrations which contravene this policy. It also includes a proactive approach towards marketing courses to under-represented groups which is designed to enhance the overall image of the University as an institution with a determination to reflect and implement its EDI commitment. We will also provide impartial guidance to all applicants so that they are placed on the best courses to help them succeed. Publicity and promotion of the University to students may include:

- Developing entry criteria which is clear and does not discriminate unfairly by, for example, only referring to traditional entry qualifications.
- Placing advertisements in non-traditional outlets.
- Establishing links with the publicity networks of local community groups and other organisations.
- Developing progression partnerships with local schools and FE colleges.
- Providing detailed information about the range of opportunities open to mature people without traditional entry requirements, which makes explicit the criteria and procedures for entry.

- Undertaking monitoring exercises on the above to determine the most effective means of contacting people from under-represented groups.

Access and Educational Opportunities for Under-Represented Groups

The University is committed to working towards providing additional educational opportunities for under-represented groups. Methods to achieve this aim may include the following:

- An increase in the number of courses designed to be particularly attractive for these groups, taking advantage wherever possible of any external funding available and working closely with local and national bodies, which seek to extend educational opportunities for under-represented groups.
- An increase in the number of routes to improve access into existing provision in partnership with local schools and FE colleges.
- Moves towards greater diversity in course structure, including an extension of short course, part-time and evening provision, and the creation of more flexible learning opportunities so that students can vary their pace of study.

Admissions Policy

On courses where particular groups are significantly under-represented, the University will seek to identify the cause and to take positive action.

To assist in this process, course or subject teams will need to:

- Monitor the profile of entrants to their programmes.
- Identify the nature and cause of significant under-representation within their student intake.
- To develop recruitment policies designed to attract groups that are currently under-represented.
- To ensure that admissions tutors make explicit their criteria and procedures for entry of 'non-traditional' as well as 'traditional' applicants and that they endeavour to identify study potential in the absence of conventional indicators as examination results.

The University will ensure that the application procedures and criteria for non-traditional entry to particular courses are explicit and made available to the general public. It will also ensure that this information is collated across the University in order to obtain an overall picture of developing practice.

Student Support

In the organisation and resourcing of its support services the University will make every effort to meet the needs of students who, as an outcome of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief (or no belief); sex; or sexual orientation, may find particular difficulties related to their academic or vocational work or other aspects of their lives in the University.

The network of care in the University will link up the specialist services provided by the Student Centre which provides personal development advice unit, core skills, careers and employment service with the system of support in Schools and the services of the Student Union.

The University will seek to ensure that the general facilities and services to students – e.g. halls of residence, canteens, libraries and the learning resource centre, are appropriately designed to meet the needs of a culturally diverse student body and that they are also accessible to students with disabilities.

With an ageing population, and an increase in the number of students with children, the University recognises the care responsibilities that students have, which are viewed as the role for both men and women, and takes into account the specific challenges that care responsibilities bring and the impact they may have on attendance, learning and academic performance.

The University offers bursaries, scholarships and other financial assistance to ensure we meet the needs of our students and continue our commitment to widening participation.

Curriculum Development Policies

The University is committed to a curriculum development policy, which furthers its equality, diversity and inclusion commitment with respect to both the content, presentation and delivery of academic courses. The implementation of a curriculum development policy requires monitoring, scrutiny, and where necessary revision, of internally validated course submissions, unit guides and associated assessments to ensure that they do not promote discriminatory terminology, stereotypes, information or concepts.

Where possible the curriculum will promote equality, diversity and inclusion and will prepare students for a global multi-cultural society by promoting understanding and respect for all cultures and by encouraging tolerant discussion of a range of political beliefs and religious conviction. Where relevant, the curriculum will expose students to cases and methodologies that incorporate variations by gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability and religion.

The curriculum development policy will include:

- The development of alternative full-time and part-time forms of study mode which would have the advantages of shorter-term objectives and transferability (to other courses) for those who may find difficulty in committing themselves initially to three or more years of study.
- A variety of modes of assessment to enable students to demonstrate a variety of skills and areas of comprehension, for example: projects, course work, seminar papers, open book exams, objective response exams, as well as or instead of the traditional essay or written examination. Assessment criteria will be fair and transparent.
- Dissemination of good practice from both within the University and from external agencies in the development of curriculum which promotes equality, diversity and inclusion (for example, the Good Practice Guide from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU).
- An approach to teaching which recognises that an appreciation of students' diversity, cultural background and individual learning style is an essential element of any approach to academic delivery.

- Pro-active due regard to the principles of inclusive teaching to encourage the creation of a stimulating learning environment where all students, regardless of their backgrounds are given the opportunity to realise their full potential and enhance their employability.
- Staff development will be undertaken to promote inclusive learning and the management of the learning environment for a diverse group of students.

Equality Impact Analyses (EIAs) will be used as an important mechanism to ensure that curriculum development policy does not have a differential negative impact on minority groups.

Equality and Diversity for Staff

The University is committed to equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and promoting inclusion. As an employer the University will ensure that no applicant for a post or existing employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of their protected characteristics.

Recruitment and Selection

The commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion underpins the University staff Recruitment and Selection Policy. Through the use and application of training and monitoring, the University is committed to ensuring that these recruitment and promotion procedures are kept constantly under review in order to ensure that individuals are selected for interview and appointed to posts on the basis of their ability to do the job required.

The University will use published, objective and job-related criteria when making decisions on recruitment, remuneration, training, promotion and termination of employment. Where possible barriers to equality of opportunity will be identified and positive action taken to address them by for example, targeted training and development.

Staff Development on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Human Resources are responsible for ensuring the implementation throughout the University of training, education and information for staff on equality, diversity and inclusion legislation, policies and best practice.

All managers responsible for training and development of staff should ensure that all opportunities are allocated objectively, fairly and without discrimination. This includes in-house events and external training, staff sabbaticals, secondments and sponsored study.

All training and development events for staff will include an equality, diversity and inclusion dimension where appropriate.

Delivering an Inclusive Environment

The University will provide an inclusive environment that promotes equality of opportunity and diversity and is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation of any kind. This also includes bullying, harassment and unlawful behaviours towards trans students and staff (transphobia) and/or bisexual staff or students (biphobia).

All staff (including staff employed by agencies for contracted out services), students and other users of the University services will be made aware of behaviour which amounts to discrimination, harassment or victimisation and that such behaviours may result in disciplinary action and/or amount to a criminal offence.

The University will do this by:

- Taking appropriate action against any student or member of staff who does not comply with the policy. The University has engaged in disciplinary action against both staff and students who have breached the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and in some cases this has led to permanent removal from the University.
- Ensuring promotional and teaching materials present appropriate and positive images relating to all the dimensions of diversity and equality.
- Ensuring Governors and Staff have access to comprehensive information to assist them in planning, putting into practice and monitoring their responsibilities under the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Striving to challenge behaviour which does not accord with the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Considering appropriate measures to overcome under-representation in particular jobs or education identified by the monitoring and impact assessment processes.
- Responding positively and competently when issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion are discussed. Ensuring that all students and staff know how to raise complaints and that the University provides a timely and sensitive response.

Complaints

If a member of staff or a student believes that they have been discriminated against, they should seek the advice of their Human Resources Business Partner in the case of a member of staff or the Solicitor in the University Secretary's Office.

All complaints from staff concerning bullying should be raised under the University's Staff Inclusion Policy. Other complaints concerning unfair treatment within the scope of this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy should be raised under the Students' Complaints Procedure or the Staff Grievance Procedure.

Responsibilities for Equality and Diversity

It is unlawful for anybody to discriminate on the grounds of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief (or no belief); sex; or sexual orientation. This also includes discriminating against trans people (transphobia) and/or bisexuals (biphobia). Responsibilities for approving and monitoring this Policy lie with the Board of Governors and associated HR Committee.

Board of Governors

- To ensure that the University fulfils its legal responsibilities.
- To provide adequate scrutiny in monitoring the implementation of the policy and associated action plan.
- The HR Committee of the Board will monitor this policy in relation to university employees.

The Vice Chancellor and Executive Team

- To take responsibility for the implementation of the policy.

Leadership Forum

- To provide active visible leadership on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- To ensure that related aims and objectives of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are effectively implemented.
- To ensure that all are aware of their individual and collective responsibility and accountability.
- To exhibit and role model LSBU's core Values.
- The Director of Human Resources is responsible for drawing up an annual action plan and raising staff awareness of their responsibilities under equality, diversity and inclusion legislation.

School & Operational Management

- Take ownership of equality, diversity and inclusion by implementing the policy and its related action plan.
- To ensure staff understand equality, diversity and inclusion issues and how to report any perceived discrimination or unequal opportunity and that all training and development opportunities are allocated objectively, fairly and without discrimination.

Staff

- To practically demonstrate the core principles of equality, diversity and inclusion by treating others with dignity and respect.
- To effectively identify and challenge discriminatory behaviour and attitudes.
- To speak out and report if they witness or are a victim of any form of discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment.
- To maintain an awareness of equality legislation by attending staff development programmes.
- To exhibit LSBU's core Values.
- To actively participate and contribute to creating an inclusive learning environment that values difference.
- To ensure that equality and diversity is effectively integrated into the professional practice of teaching, research and service delivery.

Students

- To speak out, or report it, if they witness or are aware of discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment and not assume that it is someone else's responsibility.
- To effectively challenge any form of discrimination.
- To take equal responsibility in ensuring that we create a learning environment where people are valued and respected.
- To express opinions constructively with sensitivity and respect.

Service Providers

- Service providers working in University premises are expected to act within the requirements of the law and the terms of the University's Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Support Infrastructure

The Equality and Diversity Team is part of HR and is responsible for providing expert guidance, advice and management support at a strategic and operational level across the University and disseminating good practice.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the effectiveness of the policy will take place on an annual basis and a report of the results made available across the University. The results will inform corporate decision making through the Board of Governors, Academic Boards and Executive Management Team.

The University is committed to devising and implementing appropriate methods of monitoring and evaluation of the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. The University will produce statistical analysis which will help to identify and to diagnose problems. This will enable the monitoring of the effectiveness of the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and identify actions that will make the implementation of the Policy more effective.

In order to provide essential statistical information, monitoring and evaluation will include:

- People making applications to the University for employment will be requested and encouraged to indicate their ethnic origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion and belief as perceived by themselves. This includes trans and bisexual applicants. The same applies to existing staff.
- As part of the enrolment process, students will be requested and encouraged to indicate race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability and religion, belief and no belief. This includes trans and bisexual students. Schools will monitor admissions to their courses as part of the annual monitoring process and will consequently review their admission practices annually in the light of their student intake and make recommendations accordingly.

Data relating to students' admission and progression will be produced at Schools' and course level by the Registry.

Monitoring of curriculum development policy will be evaluated through the University's validation and review procedures.

Student Services will monitor by race, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender and religion, belief and no belief of use by students of its services. This monitoring will also include trans and bisexual students.

Student opinion on the effectiveness of the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be obtained through the annual Student Satisfaction Survey.

Appendix 1

Protected Characteristics Definitions

Age

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age or range of ages

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's disability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This has extended to cover people who have had a disability in the past.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another. The definition of gender re-assignment has been extended to cover people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change their sex, but are not under medical supervision.

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for six months after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding. After six months a breastfeeding mother is protected through the sex discrimination provisions in the Equality Act.

Race

Refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

Religion and Belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect life choices or the way a person lives for it to be included in the definition.

Sex

A man or a woman.

Sexual Orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Information and Contact

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team has been established to facilitate and assist London South Bank University (LSBU) in realising its vision to become: *the University of Choice and centre of excellence for diversity and equality*. For further information and access to all our equality, diversity policies and action plans please visit us online:

<http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-and-initiatives/equality-and-diversity> or contact:

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