

Equality and diversity policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how the University intends to meet its equality commitments in respect of staff and students¹, encompassing its general equality duty and duties in respect of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010. This policy applies to all aspects of employment and study at the University, including recruitment, selection, education and assessment of students.

2. General duty

The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on public bodies, including higher education institutions, to:

advance equality of opportunity;

foster good relations between people of different protected characteristics (including

3.6 London Metropolitan University is committed to equality of opportunity and treatment and to the production, implementation, review and monitoring of policies that promote equality and diversity within the institution. London Metropolitan University values diversity, recognising that people from diverse backgrounds can bring new ideas and perceptions that help increase organisational efficiency and improve services. The University is committed to promoting diversity in all of its activities and to taking positive action. This policy is intended to demonstrate this commitment.

3.7 The University recognises its commitments under the law. The University is committed to providing equality of opportunity by aiming to ensure that its practices and procedures follow legal requirements and good practice as recommended by the Equality Human Rights Commission (EHRC), Advance HE; the

Personnel and Development (CIPD); and Universities UK (UUK). It individuals fairly and equitably regardless of sex, race, disability, age, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, maternity and pregnancy, religious beliefs (including non belief), sexual orientation, trade union activity, or any other category where discrimination cannot be reasonably justified. The University will ensure that no requirement or condition will be imposed without justification that could disadvantage individuals on any of the above grounds.

3.8 The University will strive to create a positive, inclusive atmosphere, which individuals are actively encouraged to reach their full potential.

3.9 All staff and students have rights and individual responsibilities to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations, eliminate unlawful discrimination and respect different cultures. As a minimum, all staff and students should know how to identify behaviour which is contrary to the commitments and should safely challenge it in a supportive and non-confrontational manner.

4. Aims

4.1 The University's commitments are embodied in the following aims:

the University aims to eliminate discrimination in our community of staff and students;

recruitment policies, practices and procedures will be

t

5. Individual roles and responsibilities

- 5.1 The governing body, academic board and all those in management and leadership roles will:
- undertake mandatory training in Equality and diversity; Challenging unconscious bias; and Dignity at work;
 - through their specific defined responsibilities, have due regard to the equality duty;
 - include in decision making consideration of how their decisions will impact upon staff and students with protected characteristics;
 - receive and consider annual staff and student monitoring data; and
 - promote diversity and equal opportunities.
- 5.2 The c committees are responsible for ensuring that equal opportunities and diversity principles are integral to the work of the committees they lead and for considering equality and diversity implications identified in reports and policies and procedures including those for which the Board of Governors is accountable.
- 5.3 The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive is responsible for:
- ensuring that this policy and its related procedures, mechanisms and strategies are implemented effectively;
 - providing a consistently high profile lead on issues covered by the policy;
 - ensuring that all staff and students are aware of their responsibilities and commitments under the policy; and
 - ensuring that appropriate action, under the policy, is taken against staff or students who are found to have acted in any way in an unlawfully discriminatory manner.
- 5.4 The Pro Vice-Chancellors and the Chief Operating Officer have responsibility for the development, co-ordination, dissemination, and monitoring of this policy, with specific responsibility for:
- Developing and delivering planned actions to deliver on our commitment to equality and address identified inequalities such as awarding gaps.
 - promoting equal opportunities and the management of diversity and raising awareness of equality issues across the

ensuring that due regard is given to the equality duty in decision making processes (including developing, evaluating and reviewing policy; designing, delivering and evaluating services, and commissioning and procuring from others) and in doing so consider the needs and impact on staff and students with protected characteristics and record this;

identifying and supporting one or more members of staff within their school/department who is responsible for supporting the ongoing mainstreaming of equality work;

ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support;

ensuring that all staff in their school or department undertake mandatory training in Equality and diversity; Challenging unconscious bias; and Dignity at work.

taking appropriate action against staff who discriminate unlawfully; and

ensuring external partners are aware of the policy.

5.8 All members of staff are expected to be aware of, promote and

5.12 All staff and

All aspects of employment (or prospective employment) are protected from age discrimination, including:

- recruitment;
- employment terms and conditions;
- promotions and transfers;
- training; and
- dismissals.

published [Retirement policy](#) sets out that the University values all staff and does not have a mandatory retirement age for staff.

6.2 Disability

6.2.1 Definition

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as anyone with a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect upon their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

6.2.2 Protections

It is unlawful to discriminate against a member of staff or a job applicant with a disability by treating them less favourably for a reason related to their disability. The University will ensure that no requirement or condition will be imposed, without justification that could disadvantage individuals on the grounds of disability. The University supports and implements the Jobcentre Plus disability symbol initiative. Under the Equality Act 2010 it is permissible to treat a person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

Human Resources collect and maintain a confidential record of staff and applicants who declare a disability. Students may declare a disability on their application form or declare at a later date to our Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS).

6.2.3 Commitments

The University recognises its duty to make reasonable adjustments to the learning environment, working conditions or the physical environment, where this would help to overcome the practical effects of a disability.

The University is a Disability Confident Employer and is working towards becoming a Disability Confident Leader.

6.3 Gender reassignment.

6.3.1 Definitions

The Equality Act 2010 defines the protected characteristic of gender reassignment as the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex . The Act refers to a transsexual person as a person who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

6.4 Marriage and civil partnership

The Equality Act 2010 states that a person has the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if the person is married or is in a civil partnership.

6.5 Race

6.5.1 Definitions

The Equality Act 2010 defines race as including colour; nationality; and ethnic or national origins. It defines a racial group is a group of persons defined by reference to race. A racial group can comprise two or more distinct racial groups.

6.6 Religion or belief

6.6.1 Definitions

The Equality Act 2010 states that Religion means any religion and a reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and a reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief .

The Equality and Human Rights Commission states that for a belief to be protected by the Equality Act:

It must be genuinely held;

It must be a belief and not an opinion or viewpoint based on information available at the moment;

It must be a belief as to a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour;

It must attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance;

It must be worthy of respect in a democratic society;
and

It must be compatible with human dignity and not
conflict with the fundamental rights of others.

6.7 Sex

6.7.1 Definition

In the Equality Act 2010, sex is understood as binary being either male or female. It can mean a group of people like men or boys, or women or girls. Under the Act, a person's legal sex is the sex recorded on their birth certificate or their Gender Recognition Certificate.

Stonewall³ defines sex as
basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and

Stonewall defines gender as
masculinity and femininity, gender is largely culturally determined and is assumed from the sex assigned at birth.

Stonewall defines gender identity as
sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (see non-binary below), which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.

6.8 Sexual orientation

6.8

A woman is protected from less favourable treatment whilst she is pregnant, on maternity leave or breast-feeding.

7. Staff support

7.1 Disability

Support and Guidance for staff and managers is set out on our Disability Information webpage, which includes our [University AccessAble Guides](#) and a link to our training on reasonable adjustments.

Our Disability Declaration Guidance and flowchart aim to make the declaration process clear and simple for staff, setting out the points at which staff can make a declaration and what will happen after they do.

We have introduced Reasonable Adjustment Passports for staff so that they can document and transfer information about their disability from post to post, to provide staff and managers with clarity about agreed reasonable adjustments; and aid transparency for staff.

7.2 Gender Reassignment

London Metropolitan University is committed to supporting all

Procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

10.6 The University will ensure that staff who make a complaint of unlawful discrimination or harassment are fully supported and are not victimised as a result of making a legitimate complaint.

10.7 Staff who consider that they have been subject to harassment

[Harassment policy and procedure](#). Complaints against students should be dealt with under the [Regulations governing student conduct](#). Staff who consider they have been subject to discrimination have the right to make a complaint under the [Grievance procedure](#).

11. Training and development

11.1 In keeping with the University's commitment to progressive employment policies, the University will provide equality awareness training for all staff. General equality and diversity information and briefings will be published online. The University will ensure wherever possible that staff development events are accessible to all staff.

Implementing reasonable adjustments for students training is mandatory for all staff and managers are encouraged to undertake our Implementing Reasonable Adjustments training which we link to from our Disability information staff zone page.

12. Monitoring and assessing effectiveness

12.1 The University is committed to effective action to eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination. The University will therefore collect, analyse and assess relevant data, in order to measure and consider how improvements could be made under its equality duty, through the setting of targets or other action. The information will be reported to the senior management team which will evaluate the progress that the University is making towards meeting its equality objectives.

12.2 The Board of Governors will maintain an overview of the implementation of this Equality and Diversity policy, and the Academic Board will consider annually the results of student monitoring.

13. Maintenance and review

13.1 The University will:

review this policy on a regular basis in light of good practice and changes in relevant legislation;

Appendix – External information and guidance

1. **Definitions and examples of direct and indirect discrimination; harassment; victimisation; and reasonable adjustments in relation to disability**

Definitions and examples can be found on the [Equality and Human Rights Commission web page](#) and the [Advance HE webpage](#)

2. **Disability**

Further guidance is available in the [guidance on the Equality Act](#) disability issues.