



## Equality and Diversity Policy

## **1 Our Aim**

1.1 In carrying out its functions as a charity the University of East London Students' Union (UELSU) is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all, and to ensuring that no individual is discriminated against in the planning and delivery of any of our activities.

1.2 UELSU recognises that we live in a society where discrimination still operates to the disadvantage of many groups in society.

1.3 Through the way that we manage the organisation and the services provided UELSU will develop, promote and maintain policies that will be conducive to the principles of fairness and equality in the workplace. We therefore aim to ensure that the values of equality, diversity and respect for all are embedded into everything that we do.

## **2 About our policy**

2.1 This policy is intended to demonstrate UELSU's commitment to eliminating discrimination and encouraging and valuing diversity among staff, elected officers, volunteers, partners, suppliers, users of our services and Trustees.

2.2 This policy is intended for all UELSU staff, elected officers, volunteers, partners, suppliers, users of our services and Trustees.

2.3 The objective of this policy is that no person should suffer or experience less favourable treatment, discrimination or lack of opportunities. We aim to create an environment which respects and welcomes everyone and in which we will not tolerate by anyone towards anyone forms of bullying, harassment, disrespectful or discriminatory behaviour. This particular applies in relation to the 'protected characteristics' named in the Equality Act 2010: Age, disability, gender reassignment, income, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. As well as trade union membership, class, responsibility for dependents, physical attributes, ex-offender status as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, lack of formal qualifications where such qualifications are not formally required, or any other grounds which cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of this policy.

2.4 We recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, and are committed to meeting them in full. We believe that a culture that embraces equality and values diversity will help us to ensure that everyone feels involved and included in our plans, events and activities.

## **3. Our responsibilities**

3.1 The overall responsibility and approval of this policy lies with UELSU's Board of Trustees

3.2 The Chief Executive Officer has the responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy. Each head of department also has responsibilities to ensure that all staff, volunteers, partners, suppliers and users of our services are aware and abide by this policy.

3.3 Everyone within our organisation has the responsibility to ensure that their actions and language are consistent with the spirit as well as the contents of this policy.

3.4 To ensure that we are meeting the aims and the spirit of this policy UELSU will:

- Discuss and review how well we are implementing this policy and adjust and or develop an action plan where necessary
- Assess any significant new or revised policies and procedures for their impact on equality

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- Embed equality and diversity into our strategic and departmental plans
- Ensure our employment practices and procedures are consistent with this policy.
- Communicate this policy to staff, elected officers, volunteers, job applicants, users of our services and relevant others
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.

#### **4 General standards of behaviour and conduct**

4.1 All staff, elected officers and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. UELSU will not tolerate behaviour such as:

- Making threats
- Physical violence
- Shouting
- Swearing at others
- Persistent rudeness
- Isolating, ignoring or refusing to work with certain people
- Telling offensive jokes or name calling
- Displaying offensive material such as pornography or sexist / racist cartoons, or the distribution of such material via email / text message or any other format.
- Any other forms of harassment or victimisation.

4.2 The above list is not exhaustive but indicative of unacceptable behaviours that will be considered as disciplinary offences which could lead to disciplinary action being taken. UELSU does, however encourage the use of informal processes wherever possible to resolve misunderstanding and problems. However it is important for all staff to be recognised that if they have caused an offense it is not a defence to say that they did not intend to do so, or to blame individuals for being over sensitive, whether the matter is being dealt with formally or not.

#### **5 Complaints of discrimination**

5.1 UELSU will treat all complaints of discrimination seriously.

5.2 All complaints will be investigated in accordance with UELSU's complaints or disciplinary procedures as appropriate

5.3 Records will be kept of the number of and outcomes of complaints of discrimination made by staff, elected officers, volunteers, users of our services and other third parties.

#### **6 Legal and statutory obligations**

6.1 The Equality Act 2010 harmonises, strengthens and replaces most previous equality legislation. The following legislation however is still relevant to this policy:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Work and Families Act 2006
- Employment equality regulations 2003

6.2 The Equality Act 2010 states that the protected characteristics are:

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief sex and sexual orientation.

6.3 In valuing diversity UELSU is committed to go beyond the legal minimum regarding equality.

## **7 Recruitment and Selection**

7.1 UELSU understands that the recruitment and selection process is vitally important to any equal opportunities policy and will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that staff making selection and recruitment decision will not discriminate whether consciously or unconsciously when making these decisions.

7.2 Job descriptions where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with this policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personal specifications.

7.3 A consistent non-discriminatory approach to advertising of vacancies will be adopted

7.4 All applicants who apply for job with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

7.5 Short-listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person

7.6 Interview questions will be related to the job requirements and will not be of a discriminatory nature

7.7 Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff

## **8 Monitoring**

8.1 To maintain and review the progress of this policy UELSU may review employment records of all employees.

8.2 Monitoring may include:

- The collection and classification of information regarding race in terms of ethnic/national origin and sex of all applications and current employees
- Exam by ethnic/national origin and sex the distribution of employees and the success rate of applicants and;
- Record recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reasons for those decisions.

8.3 The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed regularly to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunity for all applicants and staff.

## **9 Review**

9.1 This policy will be revised and reviewed at a minimum of every two years to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects the needs and practices of UELSU.

9.2 The policy may also be reviewed if legislation changes or if monitoring information suggests that policy or practices should be altered.