

Equality Policy

Operational Owner:	Emily Williams
Executive Owner:	Will Davies (Director of HR)
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Related documents:	Disability Policy Religious and Non-Religious Belief, Values and Practices Policy Dignity at Work and Study (Harassment and Bullying) Policy Maternity Policy Paternity Policy

Approval History

Version	Reviewed by	Reason for review	Approved by	Date
1.0	HR Policy Group		HRPolicy Group	October 2019
	JNCC Sub Group		JNCC Sub Group	April 2020
	Joint Negotiating & Consulting Committee		JNCC	
	Executive Board		EB	October 2020
1.1	HR Policy Group	Interim review	HR Policy Group	November 2022

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 At Surrey, we seek to harness fully the talents, creativity and skills that our people bring and this policy outlines our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion across the broader community. To achieve excellence, we recognise the value of each individual, enabling and supporting them not only to achieve their maximum potential, but also to understand their own responsibilities in creating a culture of equality. We are committed to creating an environment in which everyone is respected, treated fairly and enabled to excel in their chosen field, enriching the University experience for all.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This Policy applies to everyone who visits, works or studies with us and, more broadly, anyone associated with the University of Surrey. This includes staff, students, contractors, visitors and alumni, regardless of race or ethnicity, sex, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity status, marriage and civil partnership status or socio-economic background.

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 **Equality** enables us to create a fairer environment where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Equality is backed by Equality Act 2010, which seeks to address unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Diversity is about recognising and valuing difference in its broadest sense. It is about creating a culture and practices that recognise, respect, value, and embrace difference for the benefit of all.

Inclusion refers to an individual's experience within the workplace and wider community, and the extent to which they feel valued and included.

At the University of Surrey, we remain committed to the belief that greater diversity makes the University better in performance, in culture, in staff and student relations and in brand, both as educator and employer. To this end, we will achieve equality of opportunity as we recognise and value difference and work together for inclusion.

2 Policy Principles

2.1 Introduction

The University of Surrey is a diverse, multicultural and international community. As a member of that community all staff, students, contractors or visitors can expect to be treated with dignity and respect and in return, they will be expected to act with respect to all. As an organisation, we are committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment.

Equality, diversity and inclusion underpins all our work and is at the heart of what we are and what we do. Our commitment is not restricted to the minimum legal requirements of equalities legislation, as we aim to deliver best practice whenever possible. The University recognises equality, diversity and inclusion in its core values which are actively supported by the Vice Chancellor, Council and Executive Board.

2.2 Commitment

The University is committed to creating a working, learning, cultural and social environment that is based on dignity and respect, where difference is valued and celebrated, enriching our community. We aim to ensure all staff and students are supported in being able to reach their full potential, to contribute fully and derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the University.

To achieve this the University lays out the following basic commitments:

You can expect:

- To be treated with dignity and respect
- Not to be bullied, harassed, abused, intimidated or victimised
- To be provided with relevant support, guidance and training
- To have the right to challenge unfair decisions without prejudice

Your responsibilities are:

- To treat members of the University with dignity and respect, meeting the standards laid down in the University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy
- Not to bully, harass, abuse, intimidate or victimise others
- To ensure you have a clear understanding of related University policies
- To positively support measures introduced to advance equality, diversity and inclusion and eliminate discrimination.

The University requires all members of our community to commit to these responsibilities, proactively supporting and upholding them at all times. In addition, the University will comply with all relevant legislation and strive to go beyond the legal requirements through supporting, whenever possible, best practice in areas of equality, diversity and inclusion. We will also provide support, guidance and training to the University community to facilitate the delivery of these commitments.

2.3 Actions

To further the principles of equality at the University,

- All new staff must complete online training on Diversity in the Workplace and Unconscious Bias
- Staff on panels for recruitment, promotion, disciplinary or grievance processes should have completed facilitator-led training on Unconscious Bias and Effective Interviewing training (normally facilitator-led training is held 'in person', however in exceptional circumstances, such as Covid-19, it is held online)
- All policy and process owners, at every level within the University, should evaluate the equality implications of their policy/process and, where necessary, complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to address structural inequalities and ensure policy and processes have a positive impact on equality.

3 Governance Requirements

The Vice-Chancellor, supported by the University's Executive Board, is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and monitored. Ultimately, University Council (Governing Body) is accountable for ensuring the University complies with its legal obligations under the Equality Act, including the general duty to have due regard to:

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

The University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Team, in consultation with relevant

University committees, is responsible for developing policy and best practice in order to support meeting the legal requirements.

Information contained in this policy forms part of EDI training, which is undertaken by all staff. Any issues that are linked to this policy statement are reported to the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum and Executive.

If you have any queries about this document or have a confidential enquiry, please contact one of the EDI Advisers at EDI@surrey.ac.uk. For EDI-related reports (anonymous and identifiable), we encourage our employees and students to use the University's Report + Support system [<https://reportandsupport.surrey.ac.uk/>].

3.1 Implementation / Communication Plan

3.1.1 The policy is communicated through

- The University Policies website
- Leaders' Alert and staff emails to all employees
- Links in related websites including Human Resources and My Surrey
- References in the University staff induction process
- Students' Union

3.2 Exceptions to this Policy

3.2.1 There are no exceptions to this policy, due to equalities' legislation and good practice.

3.3 Review and Change Requests

3.3.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years. Any interim changes, such as minor title changes, which do not change the meaning of the policy will be undertaken by the operational owner. Any substantial changes required that alter the meaning of the policy will be submitted via the EDI Executive for full approval.

3.4 Legislative context

3.4.1 The University of Surrey has a general duty, as a public authority as defined by the Equality Act 2010, to advance equality. It has three aims:

- (i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- (ii) Advance equality of opportunity;
- (iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act requires the University to have 'due regard' to these aims throughout its functions and across all protected characteristics. All members of the community share a part of this responsibility and are required to maintain a positive duty in complying with the equality legislation.

3.5 Stakeholder Statements

3.5.1 **Equality:** The University is strongly committed to equality of opportunity and the promotion of diversity for the benefit of all members of the University community. The University's approach is to promote equality across the full range of its activities, in employment, teaching and learning and as a partner working with and within local, national and international communities. Equality Analysis is a process, which examines how the impact of the policy has been considered on the diverse characteristics and needs of everyone it affects. This policy has been reviewed and its entire purpose is to support equality, diversity and inclusion at Surrey.

3.5.2 **Health & Safety:** The University has duties under the relevant legislation to ensure the health and

safety and welfare at work of all staff, students and visitors and that its operations do not expose, staff, students and visitors to risks to their health and safety. As such, the normal principles contained within the University's Health & Safety Policies will apply.