



University Campus St Albans Ltd

Equality & Diversity Policy

Ref	07
Issue Date	March 2021
Issuing Authority	UCSA Board
Version	1

Postholder Responsible for Review	Director of Higher Education (UCSA)
Review Date	April 2022
Primary Distribution	Board/Operation Group/Website

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Policy Statement

University Campus St Albans (UCSA) is committed to promoting equality and diversity and a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work.

UCSA aims to be an inclusive organisation, where diversity is valued, respected and built upon, where students, staff, and other stakeholders are expected to behave in a way which makes people feel accepted, comfortable and safe.

The objective of this policy is to outline UCSA's approach to fulfilling this commitment and to make it clear to all parties what they may expect from UCSA and equally what UCSA expects of them.

2. Scope

The commitments within this policy apply to students and staff within UCSA. The policy also forms the standards UCSA sets for work with other organisations and visitors with regards to achieving equality, for example work placements and employers, collaborative partners and contractors (both in terms of employment and as a service provision of education).

3. Context

This Equality Policy reflects the harmonised and strengthened content and requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and UCSA's further statutory responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duties. The Act (and this policy) identifies nine 'Protected Characteristics'.

These are:

- **Age:** (older people, younger people, people of an age group)
- **Disability:** (not limited to physical or sensory impairments, mental health disability, some long-term medical condition)
- **Gender reassignment:** (transsexual people, transgender people)
- **Marriage and civil partnerships:** (a person who is married, a person who is a civil partner)
- **Pregnancy and maternity:** (pregnant women, women on maternity leave, women who have recently given birth)
- **Race:** (colour, nationality, ethnic or national backgrounds, heritage)
- **Religion or belief:** (any religion or lack of religion, any religious or philosophical belief or lack of belief)
- **Sex:** (women and men - gender)
- **Sexual orientation:** (gay and lesbian people, bisexual people, heterosexual people)

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4. Strategy

UCSA will:

- Ensure the principles of equality and diversity are evident in all UCSA's policies, systems and practices and ensure that these do not unfairly disadvantage or discriminate individuals either directly or indirectly
- Create an environment which values differences, raises aspiration and provides an opportunity for everyone to achieve
- Value the different contributions made by students and staff and make use of their diverse backgrounds and experiences to enhance the service provided
- Encourage and foster good relations between people from different groups
- Actively encourage the recruitment of staff and learners from all groups within the community
- Take positive action to promote equality of outcomes for students and staff
- Develop an implementation plan with specific equality and diversity impact measures and targets that review progress annually
- Carry out impact assessments to ensure that UCSA's policies or procedures do not have any adverse effect on learners and/or staff from particular groups or backgrounds
- Provide awareness raising, training and guidance for staff and learners on equality and diversity issues
- Take disciplinary action against learners or staff if the policy is deliberately or wilfully breached.

5. Responsibilities and compliance

(i) The UCSA Board is responsible for ensuring that:

- Positive action is taken to ensure that the membership of the Board reflects the diversity of the communities served by UCSA.
- They are aware of and take ownership of UCSA's responsibilities as outlined in this policy and equality legislation, notably the Equality Act 2010.
- Before making any major strategic decisions the Board should consider equality issues in relation to students and staff.

(ii) The UCSA Operations Group is responsible for ensuring that:

- UCSA's Strategy encompasses our commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The Strategic Plan has equality at its core.
- UCSA recruits and retains an inclusive and diverse workforce which is appropriately developed to ensure each individual has the opportunity to achieve their full potential and thus improving the performance of the whole organisation.

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(iii) **UCSA's Management Team** is responsible for ensuring that:

- They promote this policy amongst their staff and ensure compliance.
- All programmes of learning offered, whether existing or new, will be regularly reviewed to examine how far they meet the needs of all students with particular reference to equality of opportunity.
- They take appropriate action where necessary to assist minority or underrepresented groups to increase participation, retention and achievement tailored to any patterns within curriculum areas (e.g. gender bias).
- Teaching observations include an evaluation of how successfully equality and diversity is embedded and advanced.

(iv) **All UCSA staff are responsible** for ensuring that:

- They are aware of this policy and duties in relation to all of the protected characteristics and UCSA's Public Sector Duties under the Equality Act and they attend all mandatory Equality and Diversity Training.
- They demonstrate sensitivity to issues of diversity and that they attend and complete staff training provided on behalf of UCSA by Oaklands College to help their understanding of the issues in this area.
- Whatever their role, they challenge, within their ability, inappropriate behaviour of any person wherever it might occur within UCSA.
- They conduct themselves throughout their employment in a way that positively supports this policy and protects UCSA's reputation and embraces the UCSA value of "Valuing Diversity".

(v) **Students are responsible** for ensuring that:

- They are aware of this equality and diversity policy and fulfil their responsibilities towards other students and members of staff.
- Their coursework reflects sensitivity to issues of equality and diversity and does not include any discriminatory content.
- They refer cases of inappropriate behaviour by any staff, visitors or fellow students to a member of staff, act as good role models to peers and challenge inappropriate behaviour where they are confident in so doing.

6. Staff Development and Awareness

Staff employed with Oaklands College will attend periodic training and awareness raising to staff and students through face to face and online Equality & Diversity induction courses. Staff who are employed by the University of Hertfordshire will attend training that embraces and promotes Equality and Diversity.

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7. Implementation and Monitoring

The UCSA Board has the responsibility for the monitoring of the Equality and Diversity Policy and any associated action plans. It monitors and reviews the effectiveness of its Equality and Diversity policy by:

- Ensuring equality and diversity feature as a regular agenda items at both Board and Operation Group Meetings.
- Consulting of appropriate groups and stakeholders in its review and on-going development.
- Reviewing and implementing best practice.
- Publishing Equality and Diversity Objectives each year .

The policy is underpinned by UCSA Values and Behaviours;

VALUES

UCSA is dedicated to each student realising their aspirations and ambitions by a commitment to:

Collaboration

Respect

Excellence

Achievement

Trust

Enjoyment in learning

Each of these values is underpinned by particular behaviours:

Collaboration:

We will show this by:

- Encouraging the sharing of best practice
- Working together to discuss issues and identify solutions
- Supporting each other
- Working together in a co operative manner

Respect:

We will show this by:

- Respecting and capitalising on individual's different experiences and background
- Challenging unacceptable behaviours
- Treating people according to their individual circumstances
- Embracing diversity

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Excellence:

We will show this by:

- Being a positive role model and leading by example
- Reflecting on feedback and taking action to improve
- Seeking to continuously improve

Achievement:

We will show this by:

- Having challenging but also realistic expectations
- Celebrating the successes of every individual

Trust:

We will show this by:

- Being open and honest in our communications
- Expecting everyone to act with honesty and integrity
- Expecting everyone to commit to decisions taken

Enjoyment in Learning:

We will show this by:

- Making learning fun as well as challenging
- Make learning interactive so that it also becomes enjoyable

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