

# Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Responsibility for Policy:	Chair of Equity and Diversity Steering Committee
Approved by and date:	University Council Dec 2024 by Chairs action
Frequency of Review:	36 months
Next Review date:	July 2027
Related Policies:	Detailed in Appendix 1
Revisions:	December 2024: Policy updated to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change of title from Equality to Equity</li> <li>• The addition of Degree apprenticeships;</li> <li>• Formatting and cosmetic enhancements</li> </ul>
EIA:	Data is continuously monitored; this policy is intended to promote equality.

## 1. Policy Statement

Consistent with its Mission, Liverpool Hope strives to be a University where social justice, the individual and individuality matter. We hold students, Apprentices, staff, employers and visitors in high regard and we seek to foster a diverse working and learning community that recognises and respects difference and which supports all of its members to succeed.

Hope is committed to mainstreaming Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into the full range of its activities to ensure our campuses, whether physical or virtual, are welcoming to all. This policy provides the framework for the implementation and monitoring of policies which promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. It is intended to create a culture where all forms of discriminatory behaviour, harassment and unfair treatment (even inadvertent) are unacceptable, challenged and addressed. No individual, whether staff, student, apprentice or visitor should experience discrimination or harassment because the University values the diversity of its community which enriches working environments, research, studying and learning experiences. The University fosters and encourages an inclusive environment in which transparency and equity are core principles.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is linked to a range of additional policies and procedures listed in Appendix1 and is implemented in accordance with the relevant current legislation and codes of practice.

## 2. Commitment

The University has a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination in any form and seeks to ensure that all students, apprentices, staff, employers and visitors, including those who apply to work or study with us, are treated fairly, feel valued and are not subjected to unlawful discrimination. Specifically, Through the collective responsibility of the whole community of staff, students, apprentices, employers and visitors, Liverpool Hope is committed to:-

- Creating an environment in which individuals can express their views or values with respect and dignity free from bullying, harassment and victimisation;
- Encouraging full representation of under-represented groups in the organisation and its decision making. Where necessary, the University may take lawful positive action to increase the representation of individuals from groups that have been under-represented in the University community. Positive action is distinct from positive discrimination which is unlawful in the UK;
- Encouraging diversity and inclusion so that everyone can participate fully, and be recognised for the varied contributions they make, in ensuring the University achieves its distinctive mission;
- Maintaining policies and practices which aim to eradicate discrimination.
- Ensuring that the core values of Hope's Mission underpin all of the internal and external activities of the University;
- Support clear pathways for individuals or groups to report and address discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or any other breaches of this policy without fear of recrimination;
- Monitor compliance with the policy and have clear steps to address any issues identified in this process.

Underpinning this approach is the principle that no individual will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of protected characteristics including sex, marriage or civil partnership, gender identity, pregnancy and maternity, racial group (including race, colour, nationality (and citizenship), ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief (including philosophical belief and a lack of belief) age, socio-economic background, trade union membership, criminal background or any other irrelevant distinction.

In addition, working, learning and social environments and practices seek to support staff and students, where reasonable and practicable, across a wider set of equality areas. These may include where staff and students identify with: • Being a care experienced person • Being estranged from family • Experiencing menopause and perimenopause • Being a refugee or asylum seeker • Identifying with a particular socio-economic background.

The University recognises that individuals frequently identify with more than one protected characteristic and that this intersectionality can result in additional unfavourable treatment in turn leading to disadvantage. The University commits to understanding intersectionality and to taking action to mitigate its negative effects where appropriate.

### **3. Legal Framework**

The legal framework is provided by the Equality Act 2010, the various Regulations arising from the Act, including the Public Sector Equality Duty; also, the Human Rights Act 1998 and Guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, including the EHRC Code. The Office for Students (OFS) requires the University to meet conditions related to fairness.

3.1.1 The University sets Equality and Diversity Objectives to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality, consistent with the legal and regulatory requirements.

3.1.2 The University has a Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Management of Events on Campus which ensures that staff, students and other users of the University premises assist the University in securing freedom of speech consistent with the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023.

### **4. Scope of Policy**

4.1 This policy applies to all students, staff, employers of Degree Apprenticeships, and visitors to the University along with those contracted to work at, or for, the University. Staff include consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers. Our aim is that no individual is denied opportunities for reasons unrelated to ability. The policy extends to the way in which staff, students, visitors and applicants for study or employment treat each other in order to ensure a culture of belonging and mutual respect for individual differences.

4.2 When engaged in university business or studying off campus staff and students, Degree Apprenticeship employers and learners, should continue to adhere to this policy whilst also familiarising themselves with any local custom or practice.

4.3 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and may be updated at any point.

### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

All staff, students, Degree Apprenticeship Employers, and visitors to the University are expected to treat others in accordance with this Policy and to challenge or report unacceptable behaviour.

5.1 All staff and Degree Apprenticeship Employers have a responsibility to read and understand the policy and supporting policies and schemes. They are required to undertake appropriate professional development including mandatory training appropriate to their role in order to fully understand the importance of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the day-to-day life of the University. They should report unacceptable behaviour in a safe manner.

5.2 This policy has the explicit backing of senior leaders including the Chair and

members of Council and the Vice Chancellor. Senior management will undergo appropriate professional development as required to ensure that they are well placed to implement, monitor and review the policy. They will also oversee regular reporting on its effectiveness. The University Council has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that both Council itself and the University as a whole operates within the framework of this Policy. Council delegates detailed consideration of policy development in this area to its Staffing Committee.

- 5.3 Day to day responsibility for leading the operation of this policy lies with the designated member of University Executive Board (UEB); UEB has responsibility for creation of a community environment in which inclusion and respect are core values. The Board oversees implementation of this policy and adherence to it through reporting from Staffing Committee and Equality and Diversity Steering Committee UEB also has responsibility for promoting new initiatives that enhance understanding of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- 5.4 Those staff and Degree Apprenticeship employers involved in teaching and supporting students are responsible for:
- Ensuring all students are aware of the Policy and how to report any concerns relating to it;
  - Creating a supportive, inclusive culture by enabling open conversations in the classroom and beyond which proactively remove barriers to inclusion;
  - Ensuring that learning opportunities challenge stereotypes, hierarchies and prejudice, promote inclusivity and respect for others both within and outside the classroom.
  - Delivering a curriculum which covers the knowledge, skills and values which students need to promote non-discriminatory behaviour and which helps them to understand and value diversity
  - Ensuring that inclusive practice is embedded in curriculum design so that anticipatory reasonable adjustments are provided consistently and with certainty for those with protected characteristics;
  - Working towards decolonising the curriculum;
  - Materials used to deliver the curriculum are free from discriminatory assumptions, images and languages unless they are being studied as examples of such.
  - Ensuring that students understand the expectations of them in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and know how to raise concerns.
  - Upholding the principles of free speech in a manner that is consistent with this Policy.
- 5.5 Staff with responsibility for research governance must ensure that research undertaken by the University does not contravene this policy. In alignment with UKRI's EDI strategy, Liverpool Hope University recognises the indispensable role of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in advancing research and innovation. By embracing a wider spectrum of individuals and talents, we amplify the potential for excellence in Research, Scholarship and Knowledge Exchange and Impact.

We are committed to cultivating environments that nurture diverse perspectives, fostering an inclusive culture where all individuals and their ideas thrive and to leverage our position as an employer to cultivate a research and innovation ecosystem that embraces diversity and inclusivity. Our goal is to ensure that everyone feels empowered to participate, contribute, and benefit from our investments in research, scholarship, and innovation, thereby creating a system that serves the interests of all.

- 5.6 Managers and Degree Apprenticeship Employers are expected to promote this policy by treating all staff with dignity and respect and challenging/reporting unacceptable behaviour. Managers and Degree Apprenticeship Employers should be ready to raise awareness of this policy and monitor compliance with it, advising staff on where further information can be found relevant to the policy and its implementation. They should also be able to deal with complaints sensitively, fairly in a confidential manner.
- 5.7 All students are required to read and adhere to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and should report any concerns relating to discrimination and harassment.
- 5.8 Visitors should be aware of the culture of respect and dignity supported at the University and adhere to it.
- 5.9 The University will always take appropriate action to address non-compliance with this policy.

## **6. Aims of the Policy**

6.1 The University aims to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion amongst staff, students and visitors by:

- having an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy;
- taking appropriate action to ensure the needs of individuals are understood, respected and met;
- ensuring that this policy is promoted and embedded throughout the University community and is therefore used to guide key practices, communication, policies and processes;
- creating a supportive learning and working environment where individuals are respected and valued to achieve their full potential;
- involving staff, students and other stakeholders in the delivery and development of the institutional Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives;
- provide spaces for discussion which encourage all staff and students to play a role in the implementation of the policy and in its future development;
- actively engaging all staff with relevant training to enhance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;
- providing opportunities for staff and students to share both good practice and concerns in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;
- enabling applications from the widest potential pool of applicants for both employment and study by applying fair, inclusive and transparent processes;

- ensure that support services are open to all as far as possible;
- ensuring that all visitors to the campus including service providers are aware of the policy and follow its guiding principles;
- effective monitoring, analysis and reporting of data related to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion;

## 6.2 Implementation

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is available to all staff, students and visitors to the University. If alternative formats of the Policy are required, please contact the Gateway Team [gateway@hope.ac.uk](mailto:gateway@hope.ac.uk).

The Equality and Diversity Steering Committee may from time to time supplement the approved Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy with guidelines that will be disseminated to relevant staff and students. **All members of the University community share responsibility for successful implementation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.** The University will ensure that the policy is underpinned by making reasonable adjustments both to staff working practices and to student assessment practices where practicable.

## 7. Reporting, Investigation and Sanctions

### 7.1 Reporting

Staff, students and visitors have the right to make a complaint without fear of victimisation. The University will take seriously any incidents of non-adherence to the Policy by staff, students and visitors. Any instances of non-adherence will be investigated.

A report can be made, anonymously if preferred, by reference to the appropriate reporting platform found [here](#).

Staff and students should refer to the guidance in the relevant policies detailed in Appendix 1. Visitors should initially send any complaint to the area of the University to which the complaint refers or can use the reporting platform.

### 7.2 Investigations and Sanctions

Issues raised will be treated in confidence where possible/requested and investigated as appropriate.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the University for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the University's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice. Any complaint involving staff will be taken seriously and dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner in accordance with the appropriate complaint, grievance and

disciplinary procedures. These policies can be found on the University website.

Students who commit serious acts of harassment, discrimination, bullying or victimisation will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Process. Complaints in relation to other students will be dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner and can be raised via the Students' Complaints Procedures and/or the Code of Student Discipline. Complaints in relation to staff will be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints process. These policies can be found on the University website.

With regard to any breach of the policy by visitors, Degree Apprenticeship Employers or contractors, the University will take appropriate action depending on the relationship with the University and the nature of the incident.

## **8. Internal Monitoring and Auditing of Delivery**

The implementation and effectiveness of this Policy is monitored through a variety of audit/data collection both locally and to relevant central Committees. For example:

- i. Staff Equality and Diversity Reports including consideration of recruitment and workforce composition;
- ii. Promotion outcomes;
- iii. Student data report including access, success and progression to full time employment or further study for students with protected characteristics
- iv. Complaints and student discipline;
- v. Staff development and training undertaken;
- vi. Pay and Remuneration;

The University requires Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to be an important element of the annual review processes. Every aspect of the University's work is conducted with a view towards ensuring that Equality and Diversity is front and centre. We use this policy in all arenas and we are committed to it. We recruit with integrity; we take pride in our delivery / training being fully inclusive.

The Equality and Diversity Steering Committee meets once a term and commission's comparative and time series analyses of student and staff data in relation to equality and diversity; staff and student data, including Employer Degree Apprenticeship data, is monitored annually by Equality and Diversity Steering Committee. Annual reports detailing progress towards the actions set out in the University's Equality and Diversity Objectives are also reviewed by the Committee. Staff, Employers of Degree Apprenticeships and students are consulted about matters relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and any corrective actions required to achieve the Equality Objectives. Reports from this committee are sent to Staffing Committee and ultimately to University Council.

## **Appendix 1 – Related Policies and Procedures**

### **STUDENTS/APPRENTICES**

- Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Management of Events on Campus
- Policy Statement and Guidelines for Support for Disabled Students
- Universal Assessment Regulations Concessions for Students with an Illness, Disability, Injury or other Adverse Personal Circumstances
- Policy Statement and Guidelines for Student Mental Health Support Policy on use of religious facilities
- Policy and Process for Handling Sexual Misconduct
- Policy on Sexual or Romantic Relationships between Staff and Students
- Transgender Policy Code of Student Conduct Safeguarding
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy – Statement on Inclusive Language Use
- Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy
- Student Code of Conduct

These policies and procedures can be accessed from our student web pages: [click here](#)

### **STAFF**

- Dignity at Work Policy Disciplinary Procedure Capability Policy
- Equal Pay Policy Statement
- Conflict Resolution and Grievance Procedure Policy and Process for Handling Sexual Misconduct
- Policy on Sexual or Romantic Relationships between Staff and Students
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Sickness Absence and Monitoring Policy Staff Development Policy and Procedure Stress Management Policy

This is not an exhaustive list of policies and procedures. All policies and procedures relating to staff can be found [here](#).



## **Appendix Two - Types of unlawful discrimination**

**Direct discrimination** is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

**Indirect discrimination** is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic (although it does not explicitly include pregnancy and maternity, which is covered by indirect sex discrimination) such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

**Harassment** is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

**Associative discrimination** is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic (although it does not cover harassment because of marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

**Perceptive discrimination** is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

**Third-party harassment** occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity), by third parties such as clients or customers. For an employer to be liable:

- the harassment must have occurred on at least two previous occasions (although not necessarily by the same harasser or suffering the same type of harassment);
- it must be aware that the previous harassment has taken place; and
- it must have failed to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment from happening again.

**Victimisation** occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he or she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he or she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need for a complainant to

compare his or her treatment with someone who has not made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act 2010. For example, if a blind employee raises a grievance that the employer is not complying with its duty to make reasonable adjustments, and is then systematically excluded from all meetings, such behaviour could amount to victimisation

**Failure to make reasonable adjustments** is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.