

Equality and Diversity

Overview

Northumbria University is committed to providing an environment in which diversity is valued and encouraged, where there is equal access to opportunities and services and in which all prospective and existing staff and students are treated fairly, with equity, dignity and mutual respect.

We acknowledge the unique contribution that all individuals can make and it is the responsibility of the University to ensure that no one individual or group is treated less favourably in terms of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other inappropriate or irrelevant criteria or distinction.

It is in relation to these protected characteristics that University commits to 'have due regard to the need to':

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is low.
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

This commitment will be embedded into our day to day activities and functions.

It is through the implementation of the Equality and Diversity policy that the University will meet and exceed the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Responsibilities

Northumbria University aims to promote equality and diversity in relation to its role as:

- An employer;
- A provider of education;
- A provider of services;
- A procurer and commissioner of services.

This policy applies to all staff, students and visitors to the University, together with those contracted to work for or at the University. This includes secondees, those with

honorary contracts or visitor status. Responsibility for implementation of the policy is as follows:

- The Vice-Chancellor in conjunction with the Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy, with named staff having specific responsibilities;
- The Equality and Diversity Committee, the Equality and Diversity Action Group and the Equality and Diversity Sub-group of the Joint Negotiating Committee support the effective implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors, Directors and Committee Chairs are responsible for ensuring that their respective Faculties, Services and Committees are both aware of and support the Equality and Diversity Policy;
- All staff, students, and visitors have a collective responsibility to promote equality and diversity and to behave in accordance with the Equality and Diversity Policy;
- All external partners, placement providers, third party suppliers, contractors, individuals, groups, organisations and others who interact with the University are aware of and respect the University's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Implementation

The University undertakes to:

- Ensure equality of access for all potential staff and students, including the employment of staff, consultants and contractors, the admission of students, the provision of educational and training opportunities, and the provision of services to individuals and organisations;
- Promote the spirit of equal opportunity and to ensure that members of the University community act respectfully towards each individual and group;
- Comply with the terms of all equality legislation;
- Ensure that effective systems for the monitoring and evaluation of equality diversity are in place;
- Make changes in any area of University practice where there is evidence of failure to provide an appropriate and professional service;
- Work proactively towards eliminating discrimination, harassment and bullying on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other inappropriate or irrelevant criteria or distinction;

- Promote harmonious and productive relations between different groups and value diversity in our staff and student body, by ensuring that harassment and discrimination are not tolerated under any circumstances.

Effective implementation will be achieved through the implementation of the University Equality and Diversity Plan and Single Equality Scheme, which in turn, will be supported by Faculty and Service Action Plans.

Communication and Breaches of Policy

The Equality and Diversity Policy will be published on the University's equality and diversity webpage and disseminated throughout the organisation and to internal and external partners and stakeholders.

Comments or questions about the Equality and Diversity Policy should be sent to equality@northumbria.ac.uk.

Breaches of the Policy

Breaches of this Policy by staff, students, partners, contractors or any other visitors to the University will be investigated and appropriate action taken.

Colleague who wish to raise a concern or believe they have experienced any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the appropriate policy or procedure, for example the Grievance Procedure, available from the Human Resources Department or from Human Resources Policies and Procedures.

Students who believe they have experienced any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the Student Complaints Procedure. A copy of this procedure is available in the [Handbook of Student Regulations](#).

Any member of the public, partner, contractor or visitor wishing to raise a concern in relation this Policy should direct this to the Chief Legal Officer.

Monitoring of the Policy

The Board of Governors will receive an annual Equality and Diversity Report which will detail progress in relation to equality and diversity and the implementation of this Policy.

University Links and Supporting Documents

This policy should be read in association with the following supporting University

Policies:

- [Corporate Strategy](#)
- [Equality and Diversity Website](#)