

Motion to introduce an Equal Opportunities Policy

This Union Notes:

1. That the previous Students' Union Constitution included Schedule 6, the Equality & Diversity Policy.
2. That the Students' Union Constitution, passed at the General Meetings on 8 December 2015 and 8 March 2016, references an Equal Opportunities Policy.
3. That the policy presented here has been worked from the original Schedule 6, but now takes into account relative legal requirements placed upon the Students' Union, updated language and understanding surrounding equality and diversity, and the updated Students' Union Constitution.

This Union Believes:

1. That an Equal Opportunities Policy for our membership is central to being able to enact upon our value of inclusivity, outlined in the Students' Union Strategic Plan 2016-2020.
2. That having an Equal Opportunities Policy allows us to protect our members from discrimination and harassment, and makes a statement of the kind of organisation we would like our members to understand us to be.
3. That members with protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010, are often some of our most vulnerable, meaning that allowances need to be made to ensure that these members are able to access the functions and activities of the Students' Union without any unfair disadvantage. This policy sets out the ways in which we must defend, protect and empower these members in particular, but also all of our membership.

This Union Resolves:

1. To adopt this Equal Opportunities Policy as a policy sitting underneath the Students' Union Constitution.

This Union Mandates:

1. The Officer Group, as a whole, to take responsibility for implementing this policy, and disseminating and championing it widely to all of our membership.
2. The Co-President (Welfare & Diversity) to take responsibility for the maintenance of this policy, updating or reviewing it wherever it may be seen as necessary.

Proposed: Jack Kilker – Co-President (Welfare & Diversity)

Seconded: Brianna Middleton Macpherson – Co-President (Societies & Media)

Alex Reilly – Co-President (Sports & Development)

Laura Lewis – Co-President (Welfare & Diversity) Elect

Natasha Barrett – President (Education & Campaigns) Elect

Pippa Gentry – Co-President (Societies & Media) Elect



Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Equal Opportunities Statement

- 1.1. As an organisation that values inclusivity, the Students' Union is committed to creating a positive environment in which all members and students are treated fairly, equally and with dignity and respect. As such the Students' Union recognises the positive benefits of the implementation of an Equal Opportunities policy where equality of opportunity is actively promoted and discrimination is not tolerated.
- 1.2. This Equal Opportunities policy, and the Students' Union Zero Tolerance policy acts as guidance for members on what constitutes discriminatory or harassing behaviour, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010, as well as highlighting the channels available to students for reporting such behaviour.
- 1.3. The contents of this policy applies to all membership and their guests, visitors and other persons in contact with the Students' Union.

2. Aims of the Students' Union

- 2.1. The Students' Union is committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and harassment within the organisation, both in relation to its members and guests and in the provision of its services. The Students' Union will strive to achieve the following aims:
 - Equality of opportunity for all in terms of its members and guests and advancement within the Students' Union regardless of identifying with any of the

protected characteristics established in the Equality Act 2010 (race, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, maternity and paternity, marital status and civil partnership, religion and belief), but also including mental or physical health and/or ability, HIV status, or political beliefs and affiliation.

- That individuals are treated in a fair, equitable and consistent manner and are given the opportunity to fulfil their potential.
 - That everyone has the right to their distinctive and diverse identities, and to promote and celebrate these accordingly, as long as not at the expense of others.
 - To create a positive environment for all members, guests, visitors and staff, and empower and encourage our members to do the same.
 - Enable all individuals to achieve their full potential, whatever their protected characteristics or multiple identities.
 - Increase understanding of Equality and Diversity issues, and keep this understanding and awareness up-to-date with current thinking.
- 2.2. Within the Students' Union's Strategic Plan (2016-2020) one of our five core values is to be 'inclusive'. Our Values are central to the work that we do: they shape our policies and practices, as well as our behaviours and how we do things. They are at the heart of all decisions that we make and will influence the services that we provide.

3. Membership responsibilities in terms of equality and diversity

- 3.1. It is the responsibility of all membership and their guests, visitors and other persons in contact with the Students' Union, to adhere to this policy at all times and to promote equality and diversity, either through their actions and behaviours, or through involvement in campaigning and advocacy work.
- 3.2. Members must ensure that behaviour doesn't amount to discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation in any way. This refers to both an individual member's behaviour, that of those around them, and that of student groups.

- 3.3. Any members who contravene this policy may face disciplinary action in accordance with By-law K of the Students' Union's constitution. It should also be noted that any breach of the policy could be viewed as unlawful and could result in legal action being taken.
- 3.4. It is the responsibility of the Officer Group to have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the Equal Opportunities policy, and take overall ownership for this policy, alongside the Students' Union constitution.

4. Courses of Action

- 4.1. Members should feel free and able to report any incidents of behaviour against a member which can be seen or felt to be discriminatory or harassing, as outlined in Appendix 1 to this policy, and the Students' Union Zero Tolerance policy.
 - 4.1.1. To make a complaint, members should report any incidents to the President in the first instance, via an email, or seek further guidance on the Students' Union website. In the same way, members who witness an act of discrimination or harassment against a fellow member, their guests, an employee and/or visitor should report this.
 - 4.1.2. A member found to have acted in a discriminatory way in relation to fellow-members, visitors or staff will be dealt with in accordance with the Members Disciplinary Procedure, as outlined in By-law K of the Students' Union constitution.
- 4.2. Members should also feel free and able to report any incidents of discriminatory or harassing behaviour, as outlined in Appendix 1 and the Students' Union Zero Tolerance policy, to the College, in order to engage with their Disciplinary Procedures, or to appeal a decision made by the Students' Union.
 - 4.2.1. Any members who feel that they may be suffering from victimisation as a result of reporting any unlawful acts of discrimination must raise this in line with the College complaints procedure so that it may be investigated and, if necessary, acted upon in line with the College Disciplinary Procedure.

4.2.2. Members who consider themselves to have been discriminated against and who believe they have failed to secure adequate redress under the Students' Union's own procedures, are able and encouraged to take their case to the College.

5. Monitoring and Review

5.1. The Students' Union will conduct monitoring in the following areas to assess the implementation and effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities policy:

- Training shall be received by all Officers in order to allow them to effectively monitor that this policy is being adhered to.
- The Officer Group will have a responsibility to ensure that all cases are addressed effectively and appropriately.
- Complaints under this policy shall be monitored against the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010, to enable comprehensive reporting and appropriate affirmative action by the Students' Union.

5.2. Personal information required for equal opportunities monitoring is intended for the specific purpose of ensuring the effectiveness of the policy and will be used for no other purpose.

5.3. This policy, as a policy passed by the All Student Meeting, will be subject to policy lapse, and so will need to be reviewed and represented by the All Student Meeting every three years.

5.4. Relevant legislation will be included by motion as and when it is introduced.

Appendix 1 of Equal Opportunities Policy: Glossary of Terms

1. The following terms are taken from the Equality Act 2010:

1.1 **Direct discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perception discrimination below) or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see discrimination by association).

1.2 **Discrimination by association**

Applies to age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, and sex. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

1.3 **Perception discrimination**

Applies to age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

1.4 **Indirect discrimination**

Applies to age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, disability and gender reassignment.

Indirect discrimination can occur when we have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice within the organisation that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

1.5 **Harassment**

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. Individuals can complain about behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves.

1.6 **Harassment by others**

Applies to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Equality Act makes employers potentially liable for harassment of its employees by people who are not employees of the

organisation, such as customers or clients. Employers may be liable if they are aware that harassment has taken place, and have not taken reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.

1.7 **Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so.