

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy



THE UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING STUDENTS' UNION

1. Introduction

The University of Stirling Students' Union, hereinafter referred to as 'the Union', is committed to equality for all. We will demonstrate this by taking a pro-active and inclusive approach to equality, supporting and encouraging all under-represented groups, and promoting an inclusive culture which values and celebrates diversity.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy covers all members of the Union, as defined in Section 6 of the Union's Constitution, as well as Union staff, volunteers and Trustees. It is the responsibility of all to acquaint themselves with this policy and its principles. This policy will extend to all aspects of our activity, advertising and media, and all forms of documentation. It will also apply to all those engaging with the Union, beyond those already listed, including visitors, clients, contractors, consultants, partners, customers, and potential employees.

3. Purpose

This policy is to ensure that all who engage with the Union are treated equally and with respect and dignity, and that the Union continues to provide an environment where students are supported and treated accordingly. This policy ensures that we commit ourselves to promoting equality as an employer, as a representative and campaigning body and as a provider of services.

4. Policy Statement

This policy is guided by The Equality Act 2010, and believes no one should be denied opportunities or should face any form of discrimination, including harassment and bullying, based on any of the following protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation and Pregnancy and Maternity. The Union wishes to ensure that it is as pro-active as possible when it comes to creating an inclusive environment for all, and as such has gone beyond those protected characteristics covered by the Act to include: caring and parental responsibilities, gender identity and presentation, ethnic origin, HIV status, nationality, physical appearance, spent or irrelevant criminal convictions, trade union affiliation, employment status, socio-economic background, medical condition, full or part time student status, mental health status and other irrelevant distinctions.

5. General Principals

5.1 This policy reflects the Union's core values and exists to:

- i. Ensure that the Union carries out its activities within a framework that respects and promotes equality and complies with legislative requirements;
- ii. Ensure that the Union is pro-active in promoting equality;
- iii. Make explicit the rights and responsibilities of all members;
- iv. Commit the Union to monitoring the implementation of this policy and the evaluation of its effectiveness.

5.2 Our commitment

- i. The Union will work proactively to involve members in its activities who are typically under-represented or marginalized within society;
- ii. The Union is committed to providing a working and learning environment in compliance with all relevant legislation and best practice. This policy will be amended as appropriate to meet the requirements of future legislation. See appendix for details of relevant legislation;
- iii. The Union will work with the University and other relevant bodies to promote its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, and to seek to ensure that the University is actively working to comply with its policy;
- iv. Any members, volunteers, Trustees or staff contravening this policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Visitors, clients, contractors, consultants, partners, customers, and potential employees contravening this policy will be subject to sanctions appropriate to their relationship with the Union;
- v. The Union will regularly monitor practices to ensure that we meet our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. (See section 8).

6. Roles & Responsibilities

- i. Overall responsibility for implementation of this policy lies jointly with the Equality and Diversity Steering Group, the President and the Chief Executive;
- ii. It is the responsibility of every Line Manager to implement the policy and ensure staff and volunteers in their area are aware of and comply with this policy;
- iii. All elected officers, Union staff, Trustees and volunteers are responsible and accountable for their own behavior and should strive to ensure equality and diversity best practice within their remit;
- iv. All Union members, staff, Trustees and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times and should strive to respect and demonstrate equal opportunity principles.

7. Provision

The Union understands that the needs of different groups vary and will therefore strive to provide according to need, which in some cases will result in different provisions. The Union recognises the need for liberation groups (Black and Minority Ethnic, Women, LGBTQ+ and Disabled members for example) to have a 'safe space' and provides facilities for this purpose. The Union is committed to making our service provision accessible to all members. We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled people a substantial

disadvantage. Where reasonable, we will take steps to maximise access for disabled staff and members. Where facilities are inaccessible, we will endeavor to find alternative space for meetings and events in order not to exclude any interested party. Any alterations or development of the Union building shall comply with disability legislation with improving access as a priority.

7.1 Employment and Elections

- i. The Union commits itself to becoming an equal opportunities employer. It will work to eliminate unfair discrimination at each stage of the recruitment/election process and throughout an individual's period of employment or term of office.
- ii. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. We will also take steps to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market. To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our organisation, we monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment.
- iii. We will also take steps to ensure that our elections are as accessible as possible. To ensure that this policy is operating effectively and to identify groups that may be underrepresented on our elected positions we will monitor candidate's ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the election process. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not have any impact on eligibility for standing for election.

7.2 Training

- i. All staff, elected officers, volunteers and Trustees and will be offered equality and diversity training.
- ii. All staff, elected officers, volunteers and Trustees must be fully aware of this policy and its strategy for implementation.
- iii. Key staff will be trained on how to carry out an equality impact assessment.

8. Monitoring, Review and Promotion

The Chief Executive and Sabbatical Officers will be responsible for monitoring the day-to-day implementation of the policy. There will be an advisory committee, called the Equality and Diversity Steering Group, which will consist of the President, an External Trustee, an Education Officer and the Chief Executive. The policy will be annually reviewed by the Steering Group and submitted to the Trustee Board for approval. The Steering Group will meet once every semester to assess and assist with implementation of the policy, and act as advisors to the Equality Champions Group. The Steering Group will consult with relevant people and organisations to help inform their review of Union policy and practice and how Union members and staff from under-represented and marginalized groups:

- Could participate more fully in the policy making and activities of the union
- Could benefit from improved union services

8.1 Legislation Changes

As legislation changes the Steering Group will be responsible for organising a review of the policy, its implementation and effect. Implementation will take the form of an Action Plan containing explicit, measurable and achievable objectives and targets. Responsibility for implementing the Action Plan rests with the Champions Group. The progress of the Action Plan will be reported on annually and will be made public to:

- i. All staff, through department meetings
- ii. All members, through general meetings (presented by the President)
- iii. The Trustee Board
- iv. The University, at the review of their own policy.
- v. The review will also be made available online through the Union's website

8.2 Promotion & Publicity

- i. The Students' Union will ensure that all members, staff and volunteers are aware of the Union's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and that they are expected to promote its objectives;
- ii. This policy shall be made available to all members, staff, sports clubs and societies who shall actively counter prejudice and discrimination and demonstrate their commitment to equality and diversity policies and practice;
- iii. Notices stating that the Students' Union will not tolerate behaviour which contravenes the policy shall be displayed throughout services and outlets;
- iv. Any questions and requests for training and further information about the content or application of this policy should be put to the President or the Chief Executive.

9. Complaints Procedure

If any Union member, volunteer, member of staff or Trustee feels they have not been treated in accordance with this policy, they have the right and are encouraged to make a complaint. All complaints made in good faith shall be free of retribution. If any staff member feels they have not been treated in accordance with this policy, this should be dealt with in accordance to the Union's Staff Handbook.

All complaints will be handled with consideration to all sides and with the utmost confidentiality. Complaints can be made through the Union complaints procedure, which can be access online via the Union's website, under the section *Governance, Policy and Planning*.

Passed at General Meeting 20th March 2017