

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Updated: Feb 2023


BUCKS
STUDENTS' UNION

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

1. Equal opportunities statement

- 1.1. Bucks Students' Union is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all. All stakeholders, including members, current and potential employees, will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics)

2. About this policy

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate a proactive approach to inclusivity, supporting and encouraging all under-represented groups and promoting an inclusive culture which values diversity. The Union will provide equal opportunities as an employer, a representative and campaigning body and as a provider of services.
- 2.2. This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at the Students' Union. It applies to all aspects of our work, including all membership engagement and employment terms and conditions (recruitment, pay and conditions, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment).
- 2.3. The Human Resources and Development Manager is responsible for this policy and any necessary training on equal opportunities.
- 2.4. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

3. Discrimination

- 3.1. You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including members, current and former employees, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the Students' Union, outside the Students' Union (when dealing with customers, suppliers or other SU-related contacts, and on Students' Union trips or events including social events).
- 3.2. We recognise that people may suffer from the following discrimination: age; ability or disability; ethnic origin; caring or parental responsibilities; gender or gender identity; HIV status; marital status; nationality; opinions or beliefs on matters such as religion or politics; physical appearance; race; sexual orientation; spent criminal convictions; trade union affiliation; employment status; socio-economic background; medical condition; full or part time student status, mental health status; any other distinction.
- 3.3. The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:
 - a. Direct discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.
 - b. Indirect discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
 - c. Harassment: this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.
 - d. Victimisation: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
 - e. Disability discrimination: this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.
- 3.4. Bucks Students' Union will not discriminate against any student or potential or existing employee on the grounds of their personal views or activities except where these adversely affect or are likely to affect the values, function or obligations of the Union.

4. Principles of this Policy

Bucks Students' Union is committed to:

- 4.1. Embed our position in relevant training and communication to all members, staff, sports clubs and societies as part of a requirement that they actively counter prejudice and discrimination, and demonstrate their commitment to equality and diversity policies and practice.
- 4.2. Work proactively to involve in its activities groups of students who are from under-represented groups whilst promoting shared values.
- 4.3. Actively promote an inclusive and harmonious place of work where there is mutual respect and dignity and where harassment and bullying, intimidation or violence is not tolerated.
- 4.4. Provide equal opportunities in employment to all existing and potential employees ensuring no applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment or be disadvantaged by conditions or requirement which cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- 4.5. Work with the University and other relevant bodies to promote its commitment to equality and diversity and its associated objectives, and to ensure that both the Union and the University are actively working to comply with current relevant legislation.
- 4.6. As an employer Bucks Students' Union will comply with current Union and University human resource employment and equalities policies.
- 4.7. Make every effort to accommodate the needs of any employee or member who becomes disabled or whose disability increases during their employment or involvement with Union activity and will consider any reasonable adjustments necessary or opportunities for retraining and redeployment, as appropriate, to overcome barriers caused by disability.
- 4.8. Ensure that all policies and procedures are fairly and consistently applied and that no individual or group is discriminated against on any grounds.

5. Implementation of this Policy

5.1. Roles and Responsibilities

The EDI Committee, through the HR and Development Manager, will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and reviewing the methods of training in, and the promotion of, equality and diversity.

All managers are responsible for implementing and monitoring Equality Impact Assessments for their departments to adopt working practices and procedures which are free from discrimination; and for ensuring that all employees observe and comply with this policy.

All employees and members have a duty to cooperate in the implementation of this policy. This includes ensuring they do not act in a discriminatory way or influence colleagues or members to harass, abuse, intimidate or threaten any employees or members.

Any groups or individuals contravening this equality and diversity statement will be subject to disciplinary procedures or the provision of services, support or patronage may be denied or reviewed.

5.2. Language and communication

Employees and members are expected to ensure that their written, verbal and electronically transmitted, digital or published materials does not contain language or images that may knowingly cause offence to others.

Employees and members are asked to exercise good judgement and be aware of common, or inappropriate, or offensive references in relation to any of the following: age; ability or disability; ethnic origin; caring or parental responsibilities; gender or gender identity; HIV status; marital status; nationality; opinions or beliefs on matters such as religion or politics; physical appearance; race; sexual orientation; spent criminal convictions; trade union affiliation; employment status; socio-economic background; medical condition; full or part time student status, mental health status; any other distinction.

5.3. Training

The HR and Development Manager will ensure that all permanent staff and full time elected officers will undertake equality and diversity training provided by the University.

Student staff and part time elected officers will receive equality and diversity training alongside or integrated into other Bucks Students' Union training or induction programmes.

6. Raising a Concern

- 6.1. Bucks Students' Union will treat seriously and take prompt action on any grievance concerning discrimination. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal for employees or sanctions in accordance with our Code of Conduct if you are a member.
- 6.2. If any member or potential or current employee of Bucks Students' Union feels they have been treated in a manner not in accordance with this statement, they have the right to make a complaint free of retribution.
- Member complaints can be made through the Union's complaints procedure, as detailed in the relevant Bye Law.
 - If you are an employee and you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure or Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.
 - Complaints from visitors, providers or other external stakeholders should be addressed to the Students' Union HR and Development Manager and sent to **union@bucks.ac.uk**
- 6.3. The right to report instances of discrimination, bullying and harassment or victimisation extends to any employee or member who witnesses any incident which infringes on this policy even if they are not a direct victim themselves.
- 6.4. You must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure in the case of employees or the Code of Conduct if you are a member.

7. Monitoring and Review

Bucks Students' Union will undertake the following measures to promote equal opportunities and diversity:

- Monitor participation in all Union activity to ensure under-represented groups are provided with equal opportunities.
- Ensure Equality Impact Assessments are completed for each area of Union activity and review these annually.
- Review our recruitment and selection procedures regularly to ensure individuals are selected and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities and ensure vacancies are widely advertised and publicised allowing the widest range of candidates to apply.
- Monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the workforce and of applicants for external and internal vacancies (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.
- Collect information relating to member and employee experience, through surveys and specific questions relating to equality will be included where appropriate. Indications that inequality may be the underlying cause of a problem will lead to further investigation and appropriate action.
- Ensure this policy is accessible to all members and employees.
- Allocate sufficient resources to implement this policy effectively.

This statement and included objectives will be monitored annually by the Students' Union Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and published on the Union's website.

For more information or details of other policies, please email union@bucks.ac.uk