

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Updated: May 2022


BUCKS
STUDENTS' UNION

Equality and Diversity Policy

Executive summary:

Bucks Students' Union is committed to equality of opportunity for all. The purpose of this statement 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.

Policy Statement:

Our aim is to create an environment that is welcoming and ensures no student, current or potential employee is disadvantaged because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity.

Under the Equality Act (2010) these are known as 'protected characteristics'. No individual will be discriminated against due to association with another person who has a protected characteristic, or based on a perception that they have a protected characteristic when in fact they do not.

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.

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.

Scope of Policy:

Bucks Students' Union will pursue the following objectives:

- 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.
- Work proactively to involve in its activities groups of students who are from under-represented groups whilst promoting shared values.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- As an employer Bucks Students' Union will comply with all the University's human resource equalities policies, where staff are employed on University contracts.
- 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.
- Ensure that all policies and procedures are fairly and consistently applied and that no individual or group is discriminated against on any grounds.

Implementation:

Roles and Responsibilities

This statement applies to all aspects of Bucks Students' Union activities and all those involved in the Union including students, staff, trustees, volunteers, visitors, clients, contractors, consultants and customers.

The full time officers and CEO will be responsible for monitoring the day-to-day implementation of this policy and reviewing the methods of training in, and the promotion of, equality and diversity.

All managers are responsible for adopting working practices and procedures which are free from discrimination and for ensuring that all employees observe and comply with this policy.

All employees 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.

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.

Training

Trustees and managers 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.

Raising a Concern:

Bucks Students' Union will treat seriously and take prompt action on any grievance concerning discrimination.

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. Complaints can be made through the Union's complaints procedure, as detailed in the relevant Bye Law.

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.

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.
- 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 Board of Trustees and published on the Union's website.

For more information or details of other policies, please email [**union@bucks.ac.uk**](mailto:union@bucks.ac.uk).