

# **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

**Applicable from September 2025 to Present**

|                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Purpose of policy</b>                                             | This policy aims to ensure that students and colleagues within our university community can achieve their potential free from unfair treatment, in line with our legislative duties.     |
| <b>Internal services involved in authorship &amp; implementation</b> | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Related University regulations, policies &amp; guidance</b>       | Regulations for the Conduct of Students<br>Student Disciplinary Procedure<br>Harassment Policy for Students<br>Code of Practice to ensure freedom of speech<br>Student Disability Policy |
| <b>Policy lead</b>                                                   | Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Equality impact assessment date</b>                               | <a href="#">Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)</a>                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Data protection impact assessment date</b>                        | <a href="#">Information Governance - Home</a>                                                                                                                                            |

| <b>Title: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy</b> |                   |                             |                                               |                                                       |                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Version</b>                                         | <b>Issue Date</b> | <b>Revision description</b> | <b>Author</b>                                 | <b>Approved by &amp; date</b>                         | <b>Next review date</b> |
| 1                                                      | Sept 2025         | -                           | Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee: May 2025 | May 2026                |
| 3                                                      |                   |                             |                                               |                                                       |                         |

## Contents

|                                                                              |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Policy Statement.....                                                     | 4  |
| 2. Scope of Policy .....                                                     | 4  |
| 3. Principles.....                                                           | 4  |
| 4. Responsibilities .....                                                    | 8  |
| 5. Complaints of Discrimination, Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying..... | 9  |
| 6. Application of this Policy.....                                           | 10 |
| 7. Related policies.....                                                     | 11 |
| Appendix A: Relevant definitions.....                                        | 13 |

## **1. Policy Statement**

- 1.1 At the University of Lancashire, equality, diversity, and inclusion are key to achieving our vision of transforming lives. By creating a fair, diverse, and inclusive place to work, learn, and research, students and colleagues in our university community can achieve their potential free from barriers, bias, microaggressions, discrimination, and harassment. By creating an inclusive culture based on dignity and respect, we will foster good relations among our diverse students and colleagues.
- 1.2 This policy aims to ensure that students and colleagues within our university community can achieve their potential free from unfair treatment, in line with our legislative duties.

## **2. Scope of Policy**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all members of our University community, including:
- a. University Board
  - b. Colleagues employed by the University of Lancashire
  - c. Prospective colleagues applying for positions at the University of Lancashire
  - d. Students at the University of Lancashire, including those applying, visiting, and attending placements
  - e. Visitors to our campuses
  - f. Contractors working at the University of Lancashire
- 2.2 This policy covers activity taking place on campus, online, and on placement.

## **3. Principles**

- 3.1 As set out in [Belonging At UCLan](#) (the University's EDI strategy), the University will take proactive steps to embed equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- 3.2 Discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and bullying will not be tolerated, and incidents will be taken seriously. Where safe to do so, colleagues, students and visitors are encouraged to challenge and report these types of incidents. These incidents will be investigated, where appropriate, and actions taken to prevent repeat occurrences.
- 3.3 The University will apply this policy in accordance with relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010

3.4 The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society and defines the types of discrimination, including:

- Direct discrimination: Treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others
- Indirect discrimination: Putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage
- Harassment: Unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them
- Victimisation: Treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment

3.5 The public sector equality duty is a duty on public authorities, including the University, to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. In carrying out our

functions, the University must have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under the Equality Act 2010. These are to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The University also has specific duties in the Equality Act to:

- Publish equality objectives at least every four years
- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Publish gender pay gap information annually, as required by the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017

For our latest EDI Annual Report and the information we publish, see EDI Reports ([sharepoint.com](https://sharepoint.com)).

### 3.6 This policy covers the following nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief

- Sex
- Sexual orientation

3.7 When implementing our Belonging Strategy, the University recognises that there are additional groups which often experience structural, personal, or socio-cultural inequalities, including but not limited to:

- those who have experienced care
- Carers and young carers
- Commuter students
- those who are estranged from family
- those who are the first in their family to go to university
- those from lower socio-economic background
- Refugee or asylum seeker
- Service children

3.8 The University recognises that people who have more than one protected characteristic or identify with groups experiencing inequalities may experience additional disadvantage due to the intersection of these characteristics.

3.9 As a member of the Student Minds University Mental Health Charter (UMHC)

Award Programme, the University recognises the impact on people's mental health and wellbeing of an inclusive culture and sense of belonging and of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and bullying. The University will take proactive steps to embed a whole institutional approach to mental health and wellbeing into our policies, practices and behaviours, creating an environment and culture that supports positive mental health and wellbeing.

3.10 The University has a legal duty to take reasonable steps to secure and promote the importance of freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law.

The University takes these duties seriously and will balance such duties to secure freedom of speech and academic freedom with our public sector equality duty to foster good relations and to eliminate discrimination and harassment, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, as well as any other legislative requirements. This policy shall be interpreted in line with the University's Code of Practice to ensure freedom of speech.

- 3.11 The University is under a legal and regulatory duty to have particular regard to, and place significant weight on freedom of speech, academic freedom and "tolerance for controversial views in an educational context or environment including in premises and situations where educational services, events and debates take place". Therefore, there is a presumption (which will apply unless proven otherwise) the content of higher education course materials and statements made and views expressed by a person as part of teaching, research or discussions about any subject matter connected with the content of a course are unlikely to amount to harassment. However, where this is relevant, it will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.12 The University will consider 'positive action' to increase representation of under-represented groups in line with the Equality Act 2010.

## **4. Responsibilities**

- 4.1 The **University** has a responsibility to:
- a. Implement this policy, with accountability through University Board, as governing body, and governance and responsibility for compliance through the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee
  - b. Raise awareness of this policy to colleagues and students



- c. Monitor and review this policy every year
- d. Treat complaints of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and bullying seriously, sensitively and in a timely manner

4.2 **Colleagues**, with the support of Deans, Directors, and Line Managers, have a responsibility to:

- a. Comply with this policy
- b. Treat colleagues, students and visitors with dignity and respect
- c. Undertake required training on equality, diversity, and inclusion

4.3 **Students** have a responsibility to:

- a. Comply with this policy
- b. Treat colleagues, students and visitors with dignity and respect
- c. Undertake required training on equality, diversity, and inclusion, where available

4.4 **Visitors**, including contractors and service providers, have a responsibility to:

- a. Comply with this policy
- b. Treat colleagues, students and visitors with dignity and respect

## 5. **Complaints of Discrimination, Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying**

5.1 The University will take reports and allegations of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and bullying seriously and will be investigated, where appropriate.

- a. For complaints involving colleagues, these will be dealt with under the Dignity at Work Policy.

- b. For complaints involving students, these will be dealt with under the Regulations for the Conduct of Students, which includes the Student Disciplinary Procedure, and the Harassment Policy for Students (please see [Student policies and regulations - UCLan](#))

- 5.2 Colleagues wishing to make a complaint of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and bullying should raise this with their Line Manager in the first instance. Where the issue is with your Line Manager and you feel unable to raise this with them, you should raise this with a member of the People Team or using [Report + Support - University of Central Lancashire \(uclan.ac.uk\)](#).
- 5.3 Students wishing to make a complaint of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and bullying should raise this with using [Report + Support - University of Central Lancashire \(uclan.ac.uk\)](#), by notifying the Student Casework Team directly at [studentcasework@lancashire.ac.uk](mailto:studentcasework@lancashire.ac.uk), or by completing an online complaint form via the Student Hub on the University website.
- 5.4 Reports can be made anonymously using [Report + Support - University of Central Lancashire \(uclan.ac.uk\)](#).
- 5.5 Anyone raising a complaint has the right to do so without fear of reprisal or victimisation and this will be ensured by the University throughout the process.

## **6. Application of this Policy**

- 6.1 The University will apply this policy to all areas of employment including but not limited to:
  - a. Recruitment and Selection

- b. Progression and Promotion
- c. Evaluation of jobs and grading
- d. Appraisals
- e. Training and Development
- f. Disciplinary and Grievances
- g. Redundancy
- h. Dismissals

6.2 The University will apply this policy in relation to our students including but not limited to:

- a. Access and admission to courses
- b. Accommodation
- c. Appeals and Complaints
- d. Assessment and Feedback
- e. Advice and Support
- f. Conduct on campus, online, in learning spaces and on placement
- g. Disciplinary procedures

6.3 Failure to comply with this policy may result in a disciplinary matter, in line with the University's policies.

## **7. Related policies**

For related colleague policies, including Dignity At Work – addressing harassment and bullying, and Family Leave, please see [Staff Handbook - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

For related student policies, including Code of Practice to ensure freedom of speech, Harassment, Disability and Caring Responsibilities, please see [Student policies and regulations \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

For information relating to Designated Events, including the procedure and form, please see [Designated Events Procedure \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Whistleblowing Policy](#)

## Appendix A: Relevant definitions

The following definitions are provided to foster a shared understanding of broader terms used in this policy:

**Bullying:** Is intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive behaviour, through means which have the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or humiliating environment. Bullying usually involves a repeated course of conduct and includes online bullying.

Signs of bullying can include:

- Spreading harmful rumours about you
- Insulting someone with words or behaviour
- Publicly ridiculing or demeaning you
- Treating you unfairly by excluding you or victimising you
- Overbearing supervision or misuse of power that makes you feel uncomfortable

**Discrimination:** The Equality Act 2010 states that it is against the law to treat any person unfairly or less favourably based on a protected characteristic. The 9 protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic origin, nationality and colour), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation.

**Harassment**

**Microaggressions:** are subtle, often unintentional actions, comments or environments that reinforce stereotypes and lead to "everyday exclusions," making people feel unwelcome because of their identity, like race, ethnicity, gender, sexual

orientation, disability, age, religion, or socioeconomic status. Examples include (1) An Asian person being complimented by a colleague who says, "Your English is so good!"; (2) A woman in a professional setting being told by a male colleague, "You're very assertive for a woman; or (3) During a team meeting, a colleague says to a person with a hearing impairment, "Never mind, it's not important," after being asked to repeat what was said.

Victimisation: broadly refers to bad treatment directed towards someone who has made or is believed to have made or support a complaint under the Equality Act.