

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY POLICY

1. EQUALITY OVERVIEW

University College Birmingham is located in a diverse multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural city, with people of different social backgrounds, ethnicities, faiths, and generations. UCB recognises that, within its local catchment areas and its national and international operating environments, there are people from a rich diversity of cultural backgrounds, with a range of differing abilities and previous educational experiences, all of whom can benefit from and contribute to the life of the institution. The values of diversity, mutual respect, tolerance and equality of opportunity are fundamental to our ethos.

2. REASONS FOR A WRITTEN POLICY

- 2.1 To ensure that all staff, students, users of the UCB's facilities and external partners are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the law.
- 2.2 To promote equality of opportunity, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice in delivery and service experience and comply with legislative requirements
- 2.3 To promote equality legislation including The Equality Act 2010.

[Note: The legislation is briefly explained within the 'PowerPoint' document entitled "Equality, Diversity, Rights and Business Practice: Anti-discrimination Practice Principles, Staff Mandatory Training and Updating 2019-20.]

3. THE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The Equality of Opportunity Policy, incorporating Equal Opportunities policy statements, and Codes of Practice, and the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan, applies to

- 3.1 All persons associated with UCB including corporation members, staff, students and users of UCB services and facilities, and placement providers.
- 3.2 All visitors to UCB, together with those contracted to work at or for UCB, will be expected to comply with this policy. This includes, for example, members of agency staff who teach UCB students and visiting guest lecturers and presenters.

4. POLICY STATEMENTS

4.1 Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

UCB is committed to a Policy of Equal Opportunities. The aim of the Policy is to ensure that all students, employees, applicants and all those involved in its

work, and other users of UCB facilities receive fair and equal treatment. UCB aims to provide a service that, in its teaching, administration and support, actively promotes Equality of Opportunity and freedom from discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (The Equality Act 2010, Section 4).

5. UCB & THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

Section 149 (Equality Act 2010) introduces a new public sector equality duty - in force from 5 April 2011 and covers the protected characteristics – marriage and civil partnership is not covered by all of the aims.

5.1 UCB continues to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

5.2 These apply to: trustees, staff, students, clients and users of UCB.

6. COMMITMENT

UCB fosters an environment where discrimination is seriously challenged. It is committed to fairness, justice, equality, respect and dignity by attempting to eradicate discrimination in all spheres of its influence (i.e. admissions and access; student assessment and achievement; student guidance and support; teaching and learning; curriculum; staff recruitment, professional development and support; partnerships and community links; procurement and outsourcing, and quality assurance). To this end the UCB will:

- 6.1 Develop an awareness of the dangers of discrimination and prejudice in all spheres and the need to counter discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying and prejudicial practices.
- 6.2 Provide for the particular educational needs of students, having regard to their Protected Characteristics.
- 6.3 Prepare students for life in a modern day society, building on strengths of cultural diversity, mutual tolerance, dignity and respect.
- 6.4 Enable all staff to deliver a quality service by building upon strengths of cultural diversity, mutual tolerance, dignity, respect and good relations.
- 6.5 Ensure that the policy is followed.

7. TO ACHIEVE THE ABOVE, UCB:

- 7.1 Is committed to combating and counteracting all forms of discrimination.
- 7.2 Is opposed to all forms of discriminatory behaviour. When necessary, disciplinary action will be taken against those breaching the Policy.
- 7.3 Will monitor recruitment, admissions, assessment procedures, placements and training materials.
- 7.4 Will encourage applications for staff appointments from black and minority ethnic people, women and disabled people, and from people who might be disadvantaged on the basis of age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.
- 7.5 Will encourage applications from previously under-represented groups to the whole range of UCB programmes.
- 7.6 In developing its infrastructure, UCB will recognise the needs of its client groups.
- 7.7 Will forge links with appropriate external organisations through its equality of opportunity, widening participation, and safeguarding agenda.

UCB is therefore committed to and supportive of the Equality and Human Rights Commission vision of: “We live in a country with a long history of upholding people’s rights, valuing diversity and challenging intolerance. The Commission seeks to maintain and strengthen this heritage, while identifying and tackling areas where there is still unfair discrimination or where human rights are not being respected.”

(<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/about-us/who-we-are>, accessed 07 October 2019).

8. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

- 8.1 UCB Corporation will have overall responsibility for determining the Equality of Opportunity Policy. The formulation and implementation of the policy will be delegated to the Vice Chancellor and Principal, supported by other appropriate senior officers at UCB.
- 8.2 An Equal Opportunities Committee has been established to address all issues of equality of opportunity. The Committee provides advice to both the Vice Chancellor and Principal, and Academic Board.
- 8.3 An Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator has responsibility for advising UCB’s executive management, senior management, and other appropriate administrative and academic staff and committees of UCB, on equal opportunities matters.
- 8.4 Each employee of UCB will be issued with a copy of UCB’s Policy and related codes of practice and will be made aware of his or her individual rights and responsibility to ensure that the policy is effective.

9. MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

9.1 The policy along with its related codes of practice and the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan will be reviewed every year in line with UCB's established practice and the legislative requirement to conduct ongoing impact assessments.

10. ACCESS TO POLICY DOCUMENTATION, ADVICE AND SUPPORT

10.1 The Equality of Opportunity Policy is made available to staff, students, users of UCB and external persons through the institution's internet website. Paper copies are obtainable within the Library and Resources Centre, Registry, Centre for Academic Skills and English, Receptions areas within UCB. The Equality of Opportunity Policy is also accessible through other formats, for example, Braille which will be provided on request.

10.2 Godfrey Henry is UCB's Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator. Godfrey is your first point of contact should you require advice and support. (Contact information is given below.)

NOTE

Equal Opportunities related codes of practice and supporting information, which supports the implementation and assessment of the Equality of Opportunity Policy, include:

- Equality of Opportunity Policy.
- Disability Statement.
- Religion or Belief.
- Equal Opportunities Code of Practice – Grievance Procedure (Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation).
- Equal Opportunities Code of Practice (Complaints Procedure for Discriminatory Behaviour and Incidents).
- Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Equality of Opportunity Feedback Proforma - Assessing the Equality of Opportunity Policy, Codes of Practice, Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan, and Perceptions of UCB.

Equal Opportunities Committee

15 October 2019

Contact Information

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