

Draft UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1.0 Purpose

Our University community is made up of a wide range of people with diverse backgrounds and circumstances, which we value and regard as a great asset. As part of our continued commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, we strive to create an environment in which all members of our community should expect to be able to:

- thrive;
- be respected and valued for their unique perspectives and contributions;
- achieve their fullest potential;
- have a real opportunity to participate in and contribute to our activities.

Having a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, supported by the University strategy, brings many benefits to the University including: attracting, retaining and developing students and employees leading to better performance, higher satisfaction, a sense of commitment, engagement and wellbeing, and the achievement of excellence. To ensure that each person feels part of our community, the University has six underpinning values driving our culture; Excellence; Integrity; Collegiality; Engagement; Diversity; and Creativity.

As a research-intensive global University we want to attract and retain people from across the world to enable the University, and the people within it, to fulfil their potential and to excel, without prejudice. The University is seeking to lead in defining and addressing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion challenges and in identifying priorities and mechanisms.

2.0 Definitions

Equality is ensuring that individuals or groups of individuals are not treated differently or less favourably, on the basis of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, socio economic status, age, disability, race or membership of the travelling community. Promoting equality should remove discrimination relating to these ten grounds in all areas including access to employment or a programme of study, training, development, career opportunities etc.

Diversity means more than just acknowledging and/or tolerating difference. Diversity involves understanding, appreciating and embracing different cultures and practicing mutual respect for qualities and experiences that are different from the majority.

Inclusion is a sense of belonging; feeling respected and valued; feeling a level of support and commitment from others so that one can achieve their best at work and study.

¹Ten University Equality Grounds:

- **Gender (including gender identity):** a person's gender identity including male, female, transgender or non-binary
- **Civil status:** a person's civil status be it single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, civil partnered and formerly civil partnered
- **Family status:** being a parent of a person under 18 years or the resident primary carer or parent of a person with a disability
- **Socio-economic-status:** a combined economic and sociological measure economic and social position in relation to others, based on the income, education, and occupation of an individual and their family.
- **Sexual orientation:** a person's sexual orientation including gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual
- **Religion:** a person's religious belief, background, outlook or none
- **Age:** a person's age, this does not apply to a person aged under 16
- **Disability:** includes people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions
- **Race:** includes race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin
- **Membership of the Traveller community:** recognised as an ethnic group

The Disability Act 2005 defines Universal Design as the design and composition of an environment so that it may be accessed, understood and used:

- To the greatest possible extent
- In the most independent and natural manner possible
- In the widest possible range of situations

¹ 9 equality grounds (excluding socio-economic status) are defined in the Employment Equality Acts. Socio economic status is enshrined in the Constitution and in the Universities Acts

- Without the need for adaptation, modification, assistive devices or specialised solutions, by any persons of any age or size or having any particular physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual ability or disability.

It also related to electronic systems, any electronics-based process of creating products, services or systems so that they may be used by any person.

3.0 Principles

Mission

Embedding the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion into all aspects of University life including policy development, processes, and decision making which is crucial for the development and sustainability of an inclusive University environment, and the achievement of our University strategic objectives relating to students and employees. UCD believes in equality and values diversity in all aspects of its work as a third level education provider and as an employer.

Vision

Our EDI vision for the University is to be a leader and role model in equality and diversity in the higher education sector nationally and internationally, and for EDI to be at the heart of all we do. This will inspire us to excel by learning and working together to maximise the benefits of our diversity, and to be in position to measure our success. In order to achieve this we will continue to take active steps around the following:

- EDI grounds/status: ensure we provide an environment that promotes a positive working, learning, research, teaching, and a collegial ethos which is open to all regardless of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, socio economic status, age, disability, race or membership of the travelling community.
- Equality of opportunity: advance equality of opportunity between all individuals ensuring that both existing employees and students, and those who seek to apply to work or study with us, are treated fairly and with dignity and respect, without any direct or indirect discrimination, or conscious or unconscious biases, where individuals are judged solely on merit and by reference to their skills, abilities, qualifications, aptitude and potential;
- EDI mainstreaming: ensure that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded and mainstreamed into every aspect of University business through a range of initiatives and activities, and that all relevant University policies and guidance make explicit reference to

the aims of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, which includes assessing the impact of our policies, procedures, practices and communications on equality, diversity and inclusion at the University;

- **Universal Design:** embed Universal Design at the heart of what we do in UCD so our activities, educational offerings and built environment are understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, ability or disability.
- **Recognition:** underpin Equality, Diversity and Inclusion through a recognition culture in the University where all students and employees feel acknowledged and valued for their contributions to the University and supported in their academic, career and personal development.
- **EDI Awareness Raising and Consultation:**
 - ensuring that all employees and students undergo appropriate equality training for their role and that everyone in the University community is aware of their personal responsibility to (a) familiarise themselves with this policy and other equality related policies, and (b) conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times to respect equality of opportunity for all employees, students, applicants and visitors;
 - ensure that employees, students and their unions' representatives are provided with appropriate forums e.g. the University Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Group and Employee and Student Networks, to discuss equality and diversity issues, raise any concerns and to involve the community in the development and delivery of our equality objectives;
 - ensure that the EDI Policy and EDI Strategy and Action Plan is communicated University-wide through a variety of channels, and are embedded into practices such as orientation for students and employees, quality review process and procurement in order to guarantee sustained communication of this policy and associated strategy. A detailed implementation plan will accompany this policy and strategy.
- **EDI data monitoring:** have an effective data monitoring and analysis process that supports this policy;
- **Legislative compliance:** ensuring that the University will apply this policy in compliance with and in the spirit of the relevant legislation.

4.0 Scope

This Policy applies to all members of our University community, including:

- UCD employees and those staff from other institutions on placement at, or visiting, the University.
- All students, including visiting and placement students.
- Visitors, including external persons or agencies using the University's premises, facilities or services. This also includes volunteers, those with honorary contracts or 'visitor' status, for example, Visiting Professors.
- Individuals working or acting on the University's behalf, including suppliers of goods and services.
- All applicants for work and study.

This policy applies (but is not limited) to recruitment and selection of students and employees, assessments, scholarships and awards, training and development, opportunities for promotion, conditions of service, benefits and pay, conduct at work and the staff grievance and disciplinary procedures.



5.0 Role and Responsibilities

All members of our University Community have a role under the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, in that they are responsible for their own behaviour but also responsible for ensuring that they carry out their role in line with this policy. Individuals therefore are:

- Responsible for making themselves aware of the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Expected to participate in training which supports the implementation of the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, as appropriate.
- Responsible for their behaviour and expected to treat others with dignity and respect.
- Responsible for ensuring that their programmes of work, teaching content and resources should demonstrate sensitivity to equality and diversity issues. Expected to challenge inappropriate behaviour or any discrimination.

The University Management Team will ensure that:

- They take a leadership role in all University equality, diversity and inclusion related matters.
- Students and employee are made aware of this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy through the University websites, publications, employee and student orientations, training provision, through the line management structure, Students Union and any other means.

- There is strong leadership on equality, diversity and inclusion at all levels of the University.
- That, in line with the Public Sector Duty, equality is promoted, discrimination prevented and the human rights of everyone affected by our policies and plans are protected.
- Publicity material reflects the diversity of the University's community.
- Employees, students and visitors are treated fairly across the nine grounds. The University will take prompt action over alleged discrimination or harassment.
- Staff in key roles will receive training on equality and diversity related matters.
- External contractors are made aware of their responsibility in relation to equality and diversity and will be required to comply with University policies and regulations.
- Learning and teaching material, where practical, includes positive, diverse, non-stereotypical content.
- Public events are held, wherever possible, in accessible locations.

Heads of School/Unit/those with People Management Responsibilities have a responsibility to:

- Set a good example by treating all members of the University community with dignity and respect.
- Manage unacceptable behaviour in accordance with relevant policies.
- Increase awareness and promote a positive working, research, teaching, learning and social environment.
- Ensure that due consideration is given to equality and diversity within their areas of responsibility e.g. policy development and decision making.
- Participate in training which supports the implementation of the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, as appropriate and to ensure that those in their area do likewise.
- In line with the Public Sector Duty, promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of everyone affected by their policies, actions and plans.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group is responsible for:

- Leading on equality, diversity and inclusion related initiatives.
- Making recommendations to the University Management Team on all matters relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

- Ensuring the promotion, communication, and mainstreaming of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout UCD and that appropriate and effective training is provided at governance, management, faculty, staff, and student levels.
- Promoting measures and activities that enhance our sense of wellbeing and physical health.
- Submitting an annual report to the UMT on the progress of the Group.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit is responsible for:

- Considering all existing and emerging equality legislation with a view to identifying relevant issues, which are then translated into key University policies.
- Supporting the implementation of the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy;
- Data monitoring, analysis and policy development.
- Designing and delivering equality and diversity related training and awareness raising campaigns.
- Providing advice, support and guidance on equality, diversity and inclusion related issues.
- Supporting and promoting the implementation of the Equality, Impact Assessment tool.
- Mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion throughout all aspects of our university's work and study environment including our policies, procedures, key decision making etc.
- Managing the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group.

There are many other key areas/roles in the University that have specific responsibilities towards ensuring that students are treated fairly, are respected and have access to the supports they may require. These include:

Access and Lifelong Learning provides support and guidance to students from under-represented cohorts

Widening Participation Committee has a student focus, and its role is to influence, advocate and oversee the progress towards meeting the university's strategic vision and objectives to diversify the student profile to reflect that of general population.

Registrar oversees the academic life of a student from undergraduate through to graduate studies.

Dean of Students – this role has responsibility for the student experience in UCD and is committed to the continued enhancement of UCD's programmes and educational environment so that every student may be fully supported in reaching their potential.

Programmes Board reviews, approves and monitors the design, delivery, assessment and quality of the educational programmes within its remit and provides University level oversight for all programmes governed by the Undergraduate Programme Boards, College Graduate Schools,

Programme Board, Graduate Programme Boards and Boards of Studies established by the University.

Student Advisers are a point of contact, support and referral for all UCD students throughout their studies. Every College in UCD has a dedicated Student Adviser who offers students time and space to explore issues of concern to them.

6.0 Related Documents

Legislation

There are different legislative measures in place that protect people from discrimination. The University will apply this policy in compliance with, and in the spirit of, the relevant legislation.

The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 outlaw discrimination in a wide range of employment and employment-related areas. These include recruitment and promotion; equal pay; working conditions; training or experience; dismissal and harassment including sexual harassment. The main type of unlawful discrimination involves the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been, or would be, treated in a comparable situation on any of the nine grounds. Discrimination by imputation is also prohibited. This feature of discrimination law reflects the fact that people are often subjected to negative treatment because membership of a group is inaccurately attributed to them. Indirect discrimination occurs when practices or policies that do not appear to discriminate against one group more than another actually have a discriminatory impact. It can also happen where a requirement that may appear non-discriminatory adversely affects a particular group or class of persons.

The Equal Status Acts 2000-2015, prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, the provision of accommodation and access to education, on any of the nine grounds. The Acts outlaw discrimination in all services that are generally available to the public whether provided by the state or the private sector.

The Disability Act 2005 places a statutory obligation on public service providers to support access to services and facilities for people with disabilities.

The Gender Recognition Act 2015 provides a process enabling trans people to achieve full legal recognition of their true gender and allows for the acquisition of a new birth certificate that reflects

this change. The Gender Recognition Act will allow all individuals over the age of 18 to self-declare their own gender identity.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2015 places a duty on public sector bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity in the treatment of its employees and the persons to whom it provides services, and protect the human rights of its members, employees and the persons to whom it provides services. In the case of the University, this would include all members of our Community. In preparing strategic plans, public sector bodies must assess and identify the human rights and equality issues that are relevant to their functions, and identify the policies and practices that they have in place or plan to put in place to address these issues. Finally under this act, public bodies must report in a manner accessible to the public on their developments and achievement in that regard.

Policies

There are a number of policies in place in our University that support the vision of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and also manage instances where this policy is contravened. These policies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Gender Identity Policy and Guidelines
- UCD Student Code
- Student Complaints Policy
- Code of Practice for Employment of Staff with Disabilities
- Code of Practice for Conflict Resolution for Supervisors and Graduate Research Students
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- UCD Assessment Code of Practice
- UCD Student Mental Health and Wellbeing policy
- Universal Design [Need confirmation of name of this policy/project]
- Healthy UCD

Supports

Where employees or students perceive that they have been unfairly treated in respect of one of the ten University grounds, or that the conduct of an individual is in contravention of this policy, the following supports are available.

Employees

- Support and information from the line manager;
- Confidential advice and guidance about EDI provision at UCD through the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit](#);
- Advice on all aspects of employment through [UCD Human Resources](#);
- Confidential Counselling Service through the [Employee Assistance Programme](#);
- Information and support through the [Dignity and Respect Colleagues](#).

Students:

- Confidential Counselling Service through the [Student Counselling Service](#);
- Information and Support through the:
 - [Student Advisers](#)
 - [Students Union Welfare Officer](#);
 - Programme Offices
 - Module Co-ordinators for information and support
- [Access and Lifelong Learning](#) for support for students from under-represented backgrounds;-

Other Resources

UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit - www.equality@ucd.ie

Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) – www.ihrec.ie

Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) – www.teni.ie

National Disability Authority (NDA) – www.nda.ie