

BPP University – University Policies and Procedures

Equality & Diversity



Scope	Staff/Students
Approved Date	July 2023
Approving Authority	Education and Standards Committee
Date Effective	September 2023
Review Date	July 2026
Document Owner	Office for University Academic Quality/Education Services
Purpose	Outlines the University's approach to Equality and Diversity

Regulatory Mapping

BPP General Academic Regulations
Section G: Rights & Duties

BPP University
University Policies and Procedures
Equality and Diversity

<i>Introduction</i>	2
<i>Values and Behaviours</i>	2
<i>Admissions to BPP University</i>	3
<i>Teaching, Learning and Assessment</i>	4
<i>Equality and Diversity Aims and Objectives</i>	4
<i>Monitoring</i>	5
<i>Review</i>	5
<i>Responsibilities</i>	6
<i>Relevant Legislation</i>	6
<i>Glossary of Terms</i>	6
<i>Protected Characteristics</i>	8
Policy Revision History	10

1. Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction

- 1.1. As outlined in the General Academic Regulations (GARs), Part G, Section 4: Equality and Diversity Duties, the University is fully committed to promoting equality and tackling discrimination to ensure fair access to learning and facilities for students, and enacts its duties through this policy.

Values and Behaviours

- 1.2. In preservation of our values of inclusive practice, through fostering equality of opportunity, fairness, honesty and integrity the University will:
- (a) sustain an ethos of inclusion and participation through all staff, students and representatives;

- (b) promote and foster good relations between all staff and students with protected characteristics and those who do not have such characteristics;
- (c) take positive steps to counter inappropriate behaviours and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in any form; including racial harassment, homophobic and inappropriate gender-based behaviour, and all prejudicial and inappropriate behaviour because on the grounds of race, religion, age, gender, or disability including such behaviour based on perceptions; staff and students are encouraged to challenge and report individuals or groups who express such behaviours;
- (d) anticipate, remove or minimise disadvantages which could be experienced by people due to their protected characteristics;
- (e) take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people;
- (f) encourage people with identified under-represented protected characteristics to fully participate in educational activities and meaningfully engage with student activities;
- (g) provide an environment which is accessible to all service users where practicably possible;
- (h) work with partner and stakeholder organisations to uphold and maintain our values and ethos;
- (i) celebrate diversity and difference and strive to bridge cultural, social and psychological barriers.

Admissions to BPP University

- 1.3. BPP University (“the University”) will encourage disability disclosure and operate a Disclosure Policy which outlines procedures for data capture and provides applicants and students with the opportunity to restrict with whom disability information is shared.
- 1.4. Admissions teams and academic staff will give equitable consideration to all applicants during the applications process and make reasonable adjustments to that process to ensure that all applicants have a fair and meaningful experience of the process.
- 1.5. The University will ensure that it continues to offer its services to all areas of society, fostering social mobility through competitive and flexible courses and modes of delivery.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- 1.6. All schools and Academic Departments will set equality and diversity objectives based on Continuous Programme Monitoring Reports.
- 1.7. Subject and curriculum development will take account of diversity and inclusion issues as appropriate and especially in relation to race, age, cultural and religious diversity, disability, gender and sexual orientation.
- 1.8. Academic staff will have staff development support in this area, to include identifying and considering any potential areas of risk to students, staff and University reputation, as identified in appraisal and peer observations.
- 1.9. Reasonable adjustments will be made to assessment methods to meet the entitlements of disabled students and those from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Equality and Diversity Aims and Objectives

- 1.10. To develop the skills and knowledge of all staff across the University to ensure that everyone is clear about their responsibilities and duties under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and how these can be implemented.
- 1.11. To utilise an institutional focus on Equality and Diversity issues, including monitoring and target setting of key data profiles of students through the University's governance system.
- 1.12. To develop and implement equality and diversity strategies based on specific requirements identified through statistical analysis included in Continuous Programme Monitoring reports.
- 1.13. To ensure that the University's values and behaviours are embedded in corporate and academic practice at all levels of the organisation, including, but not restricted to policy and procedure.
- 1.14. To continue to engage with key stakeholders and involve their views in actions and reviews.

Monitoring

- 1.15. BPP University ("the University") will monitor and record equality and diversity information about staff and students on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity, disability and social background.
- 1.16. Where it is possible to do so, and where doing so will not cause offence or discomfort to those whom it is intended to protect, the University will monitor the sexual orientation and religion or belief of staff and students to ensure that they are not discriminated against in terms of the opportunities or benefits available to them. Individuals may choose not to disclose their sexual orientation or religion or belief and care will be taken to avoid inadvertent discrimination in such cases.
- 1.17. The University will store equality and diversity data as confidential personal data and restrict access to this information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and BPP Privacy Policy. Equal opportunities information will be used exclusively for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring and will have no bearing on opportunities or benefits.
- 1.18. Statistical information on students (age, gender, ethnicity, domicile and disability and, where possible, sexual orientation and religion or belief) will be produced and published to monitor and evaluate services at BPP University such as through admissions, registration, achievement and onward progression; this information will form a central aspect of Equality and Diversity Reports which will be produced in conjunction with the Continuous Programme Monitoring Reports.
- 1.19. All data will be submitted to the University's governance system for review and action planning.

Review

- 1.20. The University will review the operation of this policy in line with its review cycle (or more regularly if non-compliance or problems concerning equality and diversity issues are identified).
- 1.21. The University will take remedial action if non-compliance under this policy or barriers to equal opportunities are identified.
- 1.22. When reviewing the policy the University will consider the outcome of monitoring and review actions under communication and training plans.

Responsibilities

- 1.23. The ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this policy and its functions is vested in the Board of Directors at the University.
- 1.24. Operational responsibility lies with the Head of Inclusion and Learning Support.

Relevant Legislation

28. BPP will meet all its statutory duties under the following relevant legislation.

- I. The Equality Act, 2010
- II. The Human Rights Act, 1998
- III. Special Education Needs and Disability Act, 2014
- IV. Children and Families Act, 2014
- V. The Children's Act, 2004
- VI. Mental Health Act, 1983
- VII. Criminal Justice and Immigration Act, 2008
- VIII. The Racial and Religious Hatred Act, 2006
- IX. The Civil Partnership Act, 2004
- X. The Gender Recognition Act, 2004
- XI. The Protection from Harassment Act, 1997

Glossary of Terms

- Diversity is a broader term than 'equality' or 'equal opportunities' or 'equality of opportunity'. Diversity policies encompass all individuals by recognising that all of us have different characteristics which make us unique and that organisations benefit from taking these into account when offering services or employing people. In contrast to equal opportunity, diversity is not about treating people equally but rather it is about recognising and responding to different needs, experiences and aspirations and acting accordingly. Diversity is complimentary to equality of opportunity.
- Equal opportunities monitoring is the collection and analysis of information about a person that it used in order to check that a policy or procedure does not have an adverse impact on a particular group of people or amounts to unlawful discrimination. Information

can be collected on race, disability, gender, age, and in some circumstances sexual orientation and religion or belief.

- Unlawful discrimination includes *direct discrimination*, *indirect discrimination*, *victimisation* and *harassment*.
- Direct discrimination occurs where a person is treated less favourably on the grounds of race, racial group, colour, ethnic or national origins, sex, pregnancy, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or religion or belief.
- Indirect discrimination occurs where an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would put a substantially higher proportion of the members of one sex, or people of a particular racial group, or religion or belief, sexual orientation or with a disability at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.
- Associative Discrimination is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
- Perceptive Discrimination is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess the characteristic.
- Victimisation occurs where a person is treated less favourably because they have made a complaint of discrimination. This also applies to individuals who may have assisted or supported the complainant, for example, as a witness or by showing sympathy.
- Harassment occurs when unwanted conduct takes place with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment may involve physical acts or verbal and non-verbal communications and gestures.
- Positive discrimination is where you make a decision in someone's favour because of their particular characteristic, e.g. race, gender or disability. Positive discrimination is usually unlawful, unless it falls within one of the very limited exceptions contained in the anti-discrimination legislation in relation to disability or as a genuine occupation requirement.
- Positive action is often used as a way to minimise the effects and outcomes of past discrimination on groups. In some limited circumstances, employers or training bodies are allowed to take special measures relating to access to training for particular work, or

encouragement to apply for particular posts. For example, where women are under-represented in senior management posts, running special training for women to encourage them to apply for senior posts is an example of positive action and lawful. However, the appointment of a woman to a senior post solely on the basis of her gender would be an example of positive discrimination and would be unlawful.

- Genuine occupational requirement is an express exception to the positive discrimination on a particular ground. However, there are some very limited circumstances in which it may be lawful to discriminate on grounds such as race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion. For example, where being of a particular racial or religious origin is an essential requirement for the job, or for reasons of decency or privacy. For detailed information on exceptions please refer to the appropriate anti-discrimination legislation.

Protected Characteristics

- Where age is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).
- A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- Gender reassignment is the process of transitioning from one gender to another.
- Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.
- Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
- Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.
- Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.
- Sex refers to a man or a woman.

- Sexual orientation refers to whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Policy Revision History

Version Number	Description	Author	Reviewed by	Date
1.0	Revised and re-presented policy following first stage review of regulatory framework	Director of Academic Governance & Proctor	Dean of Academic Quality & Policy	July 2022
2.0	Moved from the GARs into the UPPs, with main principles and duties remaining in the GARs.	Director of Academic Governance & Proctor	Dean of Academic Quality & Policy	July 2023