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**EQUALITY, DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION POLICY**



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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1.0 PURPOSE OF POLICY

The University of Ghana (UG) as an institution of higher learning, recognizes the benefits of having a diverse community of employees and students, and is committed to providing equal opportunities in its dealings with all persons under the same consideration regardless of age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, belief, or ethnicity.

This document outlines UG's commitment, in line with internationally recognized best practices, to addressing issues related to equality, diversity and inclusion and details the institution's approach in providing guidance to its stakeholders to ensure compliance.

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that in carrying out its activities, UG will have due regard for:

- 1) promoting equality of opportunity across all UG's activities
- 2) promoting good relations among people regardless of their background
- 3) eliminating unlawful or unethical discrimination in all its forms..

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 UG believes that everyone has a right to be treated with dignity, and to be provided with equal opportunities to flourish and succeed, thereby providing an environment that enables them to do so. The institution (UG) also values

and encourages diversity of thought and experience, amongst its members and the wider community.

- 2.2 As a university striving for research excellence, UG is in a unique position to model equality, diversity, and inclusion principles in its own doings and to take a strategic lead in promoting same in the research and innovation space, nationally and internationally. UG is therefore committed to promoting and implementing a policy of equality of opportunity and inclusiveness in the teaching, learning, research, and working environment to the benefit of the University community and its stakeholders.
- 2.3 Everyone working in UG has a personal responsibility for implementing and promoting the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy (ED&I), and its principles in their day-to-day interactions with other workers and in their dealings with partners and collaborators within and outside the institution.
- 2.4 Compliance and enforcement of the requirements of this policy shall be conducted within the framework of national laws, regulations, decrees, and all applicable international obligations on diversity and related issues.

3.0 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy shall apply to all employees of UG (permanent and temporary), agents, and to visiting workers, students, workers of third-party agencies, and all internal and external stakeholders transacting business within its precincts and/or on its behalf. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes:

- a) All staff (academic, support, professional, and officers) of UG and their partners transacting business within and outside the precincts of UG, for and on behalf of UG.
- b) Visiting Scholars, researchers, collaborators, adjunct staff, conducting business within UG, the precincts of its facilities, and/or on behalf of UG.
- c) Regular and occasional students enrolled on programmes at UG (undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral)
- d) Visitors, including external persons or agencies using UG's premises, facilities, or services.
- e) Individuals or third parties acting on UG's behalf including persons providing goods and services
- f) Colleges and Institutions formally affiliated to UG.

4.0 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 UG is committed to identifying and removing barriers, making reasonable adjustments (where deemed necessary) and building a culture that values openness, fairness and transparency to ensure that access to employment, career progression, and academic achievement is based on merit and equity, demonstrable skills and experience.
- 4.3 UG is an equal opportunities employer, operating in compliance with the Ghana Labour Law provisions and as such is committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations between people.
- 4.4 UG is committed to providing education, where necessary, to ensure full compliance of all aspects of

this policy by its officers, students, and stakeholders. They will be done through appropriate training and awareness creation (e.g., orientation of new students and staff, continuous training, etc). In the same vein, UG is committed to applying appropriate sanctions, based on national laws, to all officers, staff, students, and stakeholders who violate the provisions of the policy.

5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Responsibilities of the University of Ghana

UG has a responsibility to:

- a. promote equality, diversity, and inclusion in its strategic planning processes, thereby fostering full participation of diverse groups in the activities and leadership of the University.
- b. maintain a workplace culture that is supportive and conducive to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) and to stimulate a working environment that promotes equity and respect for all, whereby individual differences and the contributions of all employees are recognised and valued.
- c. ensure that teaching and learning materials are sensitive and include positive, diverse, and non-stereotyping content and language.
- d. not discriminate, especially on the basis of such protected characteristics as age, disability, marriage

and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion, belief, and gender. See Appendix A for further information.

- e. ensure that its employer activities and policies are barrier-free and reflect evidence-based, inclusive practice. It will collect and review a range of data to understand its performance and progress in this regard and to determine where action may be reasonable and helpful, to redress any identified imbalances in experience, representation, participation, or outcome.
- f. equip employees to identify and remove barriers and take reasonable action to redress imbalances in the composition of the workforce.
- g. provide adequate training, development, resources, tools, and information to enable all employees to understand and take ownership of their ED&I responsibilities. UG will expect all employees to be aware of their responsibilities regarding ED&I in the workplace and to possess the knowledge and skills required to carry them out in the operations of the various units within the University.
- h. promote all aspects of the labour law (eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations).
- i. work continuously to ensure that its estates, facilities, technologies, processes, and procedures are accessible and barrier free.

- j. work to ensure that it assesses significant activities, services, events, and panels for potential barriers to participation, and that panel membership and contributions are appropriately diverse.
- k. provide avenues for complaints and ensure that such avenues allow for fair and timely redress of grievances.
- l. take swift and effective action when concerns related to ED&I are raised, and/or where standards are found to have fallen short of ED&I expectations.
- m. ensure that its facilities, equipment, instruments are not used to promote discrimination of any form.
- n. work continuously with the Office of Students with Special Needs to ensure a diversity friendly physical and social environment in the University.

5.2 Individual Responsibilities

All employees, students and stakeholders have a responsibility to:

- a. not discriminate, especially on the basis of such protected characteristics as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion, belief, and gender. See Appendix A for further information.
- b. not commit any acts, behave in a manner, or use language that would contravene this Policy.

- c. not instruct, induce, or attempt to induce other employees to act in breach of this Policy.
- d. help advance and foster inclusion and always treat others with dignity and respect.
- e. take reasonable steps to ensure that their decisions are based on objective assessments.
- f. avail themselves of initiatives, training opportunities and resources introduced by UG that support and enable understanding of ED&I responsibilities, knowledge, and skills.

5.3 Responsibilities of Employees and Students (Additional)

Employees and Students are encouraged to:

- a. inform HR/Office of the Dean of Students' Affairs if they become aware of any discriminatory conduct, either against themselves or any third party that contravenes this Policy. For more information, please consult the UG Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy.
- b. identify barriers (physical, behavioural/cultural, and organisational - including processes, policies, and ways of working) associated with their work and identify ways in which these can be mitigated or eliminated.
- c. to identify opportunities to promote inclusion across their areas of work.

6.0 UNACCEPTABLE ACTIONS OR BEHAVIOUR

UG will not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, harassment or victimisation by or of any of its employees, agents or assigns. The following conduct is prohibited:

- a. Direct discrimination, where a person is less favourably treated because of gender, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, age, disability, legal association, social status, or creed.
- b. Indirect discrimination, where a requirement or condition which cannot be justified is applied equally to all groups but has a disproportionate adverse effect on one group.
- c. Victimization, where someone is treated less favourably because he or she has taken legally appropriate action against UG or its officials or employees under one of the relevant Acts.
- d. The use of offensive language (verbally, in hard copy or electronic medium).
- e. Harassment (physical acts or verbal and non-verbal acts, communication, and gestures), where unwanted conduct related to any of the grounds referred to above takes place with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- f. Less favourable treatment as used in relation to disability discrimination when a person with disability is treated in a detrimental way in circumstances when a person without that disability would not be so treated.

7.0 COMPLAINTS AND REPORTING PROCEDURE

- a. Any employee, student, and stakeholder, who believes they have been discriminated against has the right to make a complaint.
- b. Any employee, student, or stakeholder who receives or witnesses a treatment that they consider to be discriminatory, or who has a complaint to make regarding intimidation, harassment or victimization is encouraged to do so through the processes outlined in the UG Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy.
- c. In the first instance, employees and students are encouraged to deal with the matter informally, if possible, by making it clear to the perpetrator that the behaviour is unacceptable and unwelcome. In these circumstances it is recommended that the employee/student approach the perpetrator in the presence of another person. If the employee/student feels unable to approach the perpetrator, they should request support from their supervisor, Head of Department or Human Resources and Organisational Development Directorate (HRODD). Students are encouraged to speak to their Academic Advisors, Heads of Department, or the Office of the Dean of Students.
- d. Potential breaches of this policy will be investigated and if established will lead to persons who commit such breaches being subjected to disciplinary proceedings.

8.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

- a. UG will gather, produce, and publish anonymised employee and student profile data and objectives

from time to time, taking into consideration the general composition of employees and students, recruitment and selection promotion, training and development, admissions, student retention, progressions, complaints, grievances, and disciplinary procedures.

- b. Information collected will aid decision making and be used to inform future work concerning equity, equality, and diversity across the University.

9.0 BREACH OF POLICY

Any breach of this ED&I Policy shall attract disciplinary measures as may be defined by the Human Resources policy of the University of Ghana.

10.0 RELATED POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

This policy must be implemented in conjunction with the following UG policies and national Acts:

- UG Code of Conduct for Academic Staff
- UG Appeals Board Rules
- UG Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy
- UG Strategic Plan
- UG Risk Management Policy
- UG Research Policy and Associated Guidelines
- UG Ethics Policy
- UG Customer Service Policy
- UG Human Resources Policy

The guidance and legislative framework that underpins this document include:

- The Ghana Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651)
- The UK Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Act 2010
- Ghana Labour Regulations, 2007 (L.I. 1833)

- Republic of Ghana, Children's Act, 1998 Act 560
- Republic of Ghana, Persons with Disability Act, 2006 Act 715
- Ghana National Gender Policy (May 2015)
- Ghana Whistleblower Act (ACT 720)

11.0 REVIEW OF POLICY

Periodic review and updating of this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be carried out by the Quality Assurance and Planning Unit of the University of Ghana. The policy document will be reviewed every three (3) years or when necessary, as directed by the Vice-Chancellor or the University Council to ensure that it is kept up-to-date with local, national, and global standards.

12.0 VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved	Amendment
1	April 11, 2022	Business and Executive Committee	

Appendix A – Protected Characteristics, as defined internationally

Protected Characteristics	Definition
Age	A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32-year olds) or range of ages (for example 18- to 30-year-olds).
Disability	Under Ghana law, a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
Marriage and civil partnership	A person has the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if the person is married or is a civil partner.
Pregnancy and maternity, including adoption	<p>Pregnancy is the condition of conceiving or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after giving birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context.</p> <p>Protection against maternity discrimination includes not treating a woman unfavourably because they are breastfeeding a child of any age.</p>
Race	Race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

Religion	A strong belief in a supernatural power(s) that control human destiny or an institution meant for the expression of such belief. A reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion.
Belief	Refers to any religious or philosophical belief; and a reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief.
Gender	For the purpose of the ED&I, 'gender' is used to identify individuals as male or female.

