



**UNIVERSITY
OF GHANA**



Publication Number 975 | Volume 60 | Number 3

GENDER POLICY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preamble	1
1. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY	2
1.1. AIM	2
1.2. OBJECTIVES	2
2. DEFINITIONS	3
3. ACRONYMS:	6
4. APPLICATION AND SCOPE - EXCLUSIONS OR SPECIAL CONDITIONS	6
5. POLICY PRINCIPLES	6
5.1 GENDER-FRIENDLY, INCLUSIVE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT	6
5.2 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY	6
5.2.1 RECRUITMENTS, APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS	6
5.2.2 STUDENT ENROLMENT AND RETENTION	6
5.3 GENDER SENSITIVITY	7
5.3.1 ENGENDERING CURRICULUM	7
5.3.2 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION	7
5.3.3 GENDER TRAINING FOR STAFF	7
5.4 GENDER BALANCE	7
6. IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE INSTITUTIONS	8
6.1 THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL	8
6.2 THE VICE-CHANCELLOR	8
6.3 THE ACADEMIC BOARD	9
6.4 CENTRE FOR GENDER STUDIES & ADVOCACY (CEGENSA)	9
6.5 ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMMITTEE	9
6.6 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES BOARD (EOB)	9
6.6.1 STRUCTURE	9
6.6.2 MEMBERSHIP	9
6.6.3 SECRETARIAT	10
6.6.4 MEMBER SPECIFICATIONS	10
6.6.5 RESPONSIBILITIES	10
6.6.7 TERM OF OFFICE	11
6.6.8 MEETINGS	11
6.6.9 REPORTING	11
7. INDIVIDUAL/GROUP COMPLAINTS MECHANISM – RAISING OF CONCERNS	11
7.1 PROCEDURE	11
7.2 ROLE OF THE EOB	12
7.3 RIGHTS OF THE COMPLAINANT(S)	12
7.4 RIGHTS OF THE RESPONDENT(S)	12
8. PROMOTION OF THE GENDER POLICY	12
8.1 DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON GENDER POLICY	12
8.2 GATHERING OF INFORMATION	13
9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION	13
9.1 DEVELOPMENT OF ANNUAL WORKPLAN AND BUDGET	13
9.2 YEARLY GENDER AUDITS	13
9.3 EVALUATION OF THE GENDER POLICY	13
9.4 GENDER EQUALITY ANNUAL REPORT	13

10.	VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY	14
	APPENDIX.....	15
11.	OFFENSES	15
12.	GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES.....	15
13.	REFERRAL OF MATTER TO COUNCIL	21

Preamble

Recognising the presence of systemic inequality between men and women in various segments of the society, including the university space, with women most often denied access to resources and opportunities and systematically under-represented in decision-making processes that affect their own lives and the larger society;

Considering that patterns of sexual inequality constitute barriers to the progress of any society as it denies the disadvantaged person or group the opportunity to contribute their quota to development;

Acknowledging that the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana recognises that any form of discrimination based on the grounds of sex has the capacity to subject the victim to disabilities or restrictions to which persons of another description are not made subject or are granted privileges or advantages which are not granted to persons of another description;

Further acknowledging that the State has a responsibility to actively promote the integration of the peoples of Ghana and prohibit discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of gender, among other grounds;

Considering that maintaining gender equality is vital to the realisation of human rights for all and the overall objective of gender equality is to create a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, rights and obligations in all spheres of life;

Recognising that one of the aims of the University of Ghana is to provide higher education, undertake research, disseminate knowledge, and foster relationships with outside persons and bodies in accordance with the principle of conducting recruitment, admission, promotion and the provision of privileges, honours and facilities conscious of the need for gender and minority, among other grounds;

Affirming that the University of Ghana is dedicated to adopting affirmative action policies from time to time, the University, through the University of Ghana Act 2010 (Act 806) provides that the University, an organ or a body of the University, a principal officer, senior member, senior or junior staff, agent or servant of the University shall not discriminate against a person on the basis of that person's gender, among other grounds, when it comes to promotion, appointment, admission and registration as a student, permission to graduate from the University, or granting of any advantage, privilege or other benefit accorded all other persons;

Recognising that Ghana is a State party to all the major regional and international instruments aimed at promoting equality between the sexes, such as the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), of which Ghana is a Party, and the Beijing Platform for Action;

In light of the institutional, national, regional and international developments and positions on issues of gender equity and equality, University of Ghana is committed to situating itself strategically at the forefront of responsiveness to gender equality;

The University considers a gender policy as an important means to promote equity, remove gender stereotyping and set up a level playing field to allow all sexes to fairly compete for available resources and to protect the dignity of the human person, the University hereby adopts this document to be known as the University of Ghana Gender Policy.

1. Purpose of the Policy

This policy is a response to research that confirms a gendered character of the University of Ghana and evident in terms of an imbalance in representation of females in the student population, teaching, administrative, technical and senior management positions. The purpose of the policy is to address this situation by providing equal opportunity to members and prospective members of the university community, regardless of sex.

1.1. Aim

The aim of the policy is to provide a framework document for achieving a gender equitable environment that engages both males and females in all critical spheres of decision-making. An environment that values diverse perspectives on the basis of gender equality, harnesses potentials and is supportive of men and women's diverse skills, perspectives and knowledge with the ultimate aim of enabling the realisation of optimal productivity for the greater good of the University. The ultimate aim of the policy is to mainstream gender in all University policies and procedures.

1.2. Objectives

The specific objectives of the policy are to:

- (i) Promote measures to achieve gender equality at all levels within the University
- (ii) Promote measures to achieve balance in the ratio of male to female employees and students at all levels within the University.
- (iii) Empower units to identify and develop innovative gender balance plans.
- (iv) Provide an avenue for redress when there is non-compliance with the policy.

2. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Special Measures	A course of action or measure taken on a temporary basis to remedy a gendered imbalance.
Complainant(s)	A person or group of persons who alleges that they have not been treated in accordance with the Gender Policy and have filed a complaint under this policy.
College	As defined in the University Statutes means one or more related academic departments, schools, institutes and centres established by Council.
Diversity promotion	Recognising and making provision for differences between males and females in order to promote gender balance in promotion.
Direct discrimination	Where a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation.
Indirect discrimination	When an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would disadvantage one gender
<i>De jure</i> equality	Equality under the law.
<i>De facto</i> equality	Equality in practice.
Employee	Senior members and staff of the University.
Equal Opportunity	The principle of ensuring that both males and females enjoy available benefits and/or resources equally.
Equal Opportunities Board (EOB)	The Board established by the University to oversee the implementation of the policy and investigate complaints under this Policy. Also referred to as The Board in this document.
Gender	The socially constructed roles and relations between females and males.
Gender analysis	Analysis of roles, responsibilities, constraints, opportunities and needs of females and males in any context
Gender balance	A situation where there are approximately equal numbers of males and females present or participating in an event, programme or employment.

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Gender-based discrimination	Differential treatment accorded different persons attributable only or mainly to their gender whereby persons of one gender are subjected to disabilities/restrictions or privileges/advantages to which persons of another gender are not made subject to.
Gender equality/parity	A condition where both males and females are accorded equal social value, rights, responsibilities and access to resources and opportunities for their exercise and enjoyment.
Gender equity	The process of being fair to males and females and typically including measures to correct historically-created imbalances, thus resulting in substantive equality.
Gender gap	The disparity (measured quantitatively) between males and females in their access to resources such as education, health, services or power, illustrating the extent to which males and females have benefited from project or policy interventions.
Gender mainstreaming	Integration of a gender perspective and gender analysis into all stages of the designing, implementation and evaluation of projects, policies and programmes as an integral part of the general analysis of any activity or policy, rather than being treated as a separate issue.
Gender-neutral	Where policies and actions are not specifically aimed at either males or females and are assumed to affect both sexes equally.
Gender sensitive	Taking into account the particularities pertaining to the lives of both females and males while aiming to eliminate inequalities and promote gender equality.
Gender sensitisation	The process of developing people's awareness, knowledge and skills on gender issues.
Gender stereotypes	Presumptions about the roles, abilities and attributes of males and females which may not reflect the reality
Gender-based violence	A form of force targeted at a person because of the person's gender and manifesting itself in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering to the victim, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in private or public life.

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Manager	All senior employees and other supervisors who are in charge of a unit and have people working under them.
Mediator	A person selected by the EOB with the mutual agreement of complainant(s) and respondent(s) to facilitate discussion and suggest alternative resolution to a case of gender discrimination. A mediator does not investigate a complaint or assign blame.
Prospective employee	A person who has applied to the University for employment.
Prospective student	A person who has applied to the University for admission to undertake a programme or course.
Respondent(s)	A person or group of persons whose alleged conduct is the subject of a complaint.
Senior member	As used in the University Statutes refers to the academic, administrative, professional employees and members of Convocation.
Sexual harassment	Interaction between individuals of the opposite or same gender that is characterised by: unwelcome sexual advances; unwelcome requests for sexual favours; and other verbal or physical conduct or behaviour of a sexual nature, as defined in the Sexual Harassment & Misconduct Policy of the University of Ghana.
Staff	Persons, other than Senior Members, in the employment of the University.
University community	All senior members, senior and junior staff of the University and their families; interns, teaching assistants; post-docs, visiting faculty; students (junior members) of the University and others who maintain or work in businesses within the University campus.

3. Acronyms:

- **CEGENSA** - Centre for Gender Studies & Advocacy
- **EOB** - Equal Opportunities Board
- **UG** - University of Ghana
- **SRC** - Student's Representative Council
- **GRASAG** - Graduate Students' Association of Ghana

4. Application and Scope - Exclusions or Special Conditions

This policy applies to all members, current and prospective, of the University community.

It covers all activities and programmes in education, training, research and work approved by the University and undertaken at all levels.

The policy acknowledges that to enable the University to achieve gender equality, there may be the need to enact special measures for the benefit of one gender and, according to law, the University shall not be held to be in breach of this policy by those who do not benefit from or who feel discriminated against, as a result of these special measures.

5. Policy Principles

5.1. Gender-friendly, inclusive and secure environment

The University is committed to creating an environment free from direct or indirect forms of gender discrimination, and one that provides a space for equal participation of men and women in the decision-making bodies of the University.

The University further recognizes the need to acknowledge the equal competence of employees of both sexes, encourage equal respect for both and discourage a preference of one over the other, except in cases where the University has instituted special measures to achieve gender parity.

5.2. Equal Opportunity

5.2.1. Recruitments, appointments and promotions

- The University is committed to the promotion of equal opportunity for male and female employees and students. At the level of employees this will be reflected in recruitments, appointments and promotions and the University shall institute special measures to ensure gender equality at all employee levels.

5.2.2. Student Enrolment and Retention

- With regards to students, existing special measures put in place in the 1980s shall be continued and expanded, where necessary, to increase the number of female students until equality is achieved in the numbers of male and female students at both undergraduate and post-graduate levels.

- The University shall institute special measures to promote increased enrolment for an under-represented gender and institute a mentoring programme (through the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy (CEGENSA) and the Careers and Counselling Centre), to support students in disciplines which are overwhelmingly dominated by one gender.

5.3. Gender Sensitivity

5.3.1. Engendering Curriculum

- Promote measures to ensure that gender courses are developed and integrated into existing curricular of the University and/or gender-inclusive perspectives in both the teaching methodology and content of all courses are adopted.
- Continue to run the mandatory undergraduate foundational gender course to promote gender sensitivity among students.

5.3.2. Research and Innovation

- Promote the integration of gender analyses in research processes and innovations.
- Encourage staff and students to undertake gender-sensitive research, including research that focuses on the University.

5.3.3. Gender Training for Staff

- The University shall ensure that all employees are sensitized to enable them to assess the impacts of University policies on males and females. Further, employees shall be sensitised to, among other things, recognise the sex-biased stereotypes they hold and the ways in which it affects their professional conduct; the value of inclusion and the benefits it brings to a workplace as well as the importance of treating each other in a respectful and non-discriminatory manner.
- Regular short training in gender sensitisation shall be organised for staff.

5.4. Gender Balance

5.4.1. Management and Committees

- The University is committed to ensuring gender parity or balance in the ratio of females to males in all spheres of the University, including University and student governance structures. Gender balance will be achieved when there are approximately equal numbers of men and women present or participating in all areas of university life. The University is committed to ensuring both de jure and de facto equality.

6. Implementation and Compliance Institutions

6.1. The University Council

The University Council shall have the overall responsibility for ensuring that the University complies with the Gender Policy. It includes ensuring that:

- (i) The principles of the Gender Policy are integrated in all key documents (University Statutes, Strategic Plan, Student Handbooks, Conditions of Service, Code of Conduct, the Sexual Harassment & Misconduct Policy) and other policies and regulations of the University.
- (ii) The Gender Policy is made available to students and employees in various forms, including as a handout at orientation programmes for these groups and on the University's website, among others.
- (iii) Measures are put in place to ensure the creation and maintenance of an environment that creates equal opportunity for employees and students of the University, regardless of gender.
- (iv) Steps are taken to achieve balanced representation of both genders at all decision-making levels and within governance structures of the University, including the University Council, the Academic Board and its standing committees.
- (v) Steps are taken to ensure equal treatment of males and females in matters of staff recruitment and employment procedures and to make working conditions responsive to the different gender roles of men and women.
- (vi) All policies and regulations of the University are in compliance with the Gender Policy.
- (vii) The University provides child-care facilities for students and employees of the University.
- (viii) Reproductive health facilities of the University are strengthened and reproductive health counselling provided.

6.2. The Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor shall take the lead role in ensuring compliance with the Gender Policy and shall be responsible for:

- (i) Constituting the Equal Opportunities Board (EOB) of the University established under this policy as per the dictates of this policy, specifically:
 - a. The Chair of EOB shall be elected by the Academic Board upon the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor.
 - b. The Vice-Chancellor shall nominate the external members of the EOB.
- (ii) Receiving reports of findings and recommendations of the EOB and following up on recommended actions, subject to section 12 of this policy.

6.3. The Academic Board

The members of the Academic Board shall be responsible for electing the Chair of the EOB upon recommendation by the Vice-Chancellor.

6.4. Centre for Gender Studies & Advocacy (CEGENSA)

CEGENSA shall facilitate and support the EOB in the implementation of the Gender Policy. CEGENSA shall continue to promote the institutionalization of a gender equity agenda as legitimate business of the University in the following specific ways:

- (i) Academic Planning and Curriculum development to promote and support the teaching and learning of gender within the various faculties and departments of the University
- (ii) Serve as a Resource Centre.
- (iii) Conduct Policy Planning, Reform and Monitoring.
- (iv) Facilitate mentoring support for junior faculty and students.

6.5. Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee

Matters or complaints bordering on sexual harassment or attempted sexual harassment received by the EOB shall be referred to the Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee for redress.

6.6. Equal Opportunities Board (EOB)

6.6.1. Structure

The main body responsible for seeing to the full implementation of this policy shall be the EOB of the University. Based on the Terms of Reference (Section 6.6.5). Guidelines for EOB members shall be drawn up by a technical committee to be appointed for that purpose.

6.6.2. Membership

The EOB shall have a membership of thirteen (13) and be composed of the following persons nominated or appointed from among members of the University community and also external to the University community.

- Chair (elected by the Academic Board)
- The Registrar or his/her representative
- The Legal Counsel or his/her representative
- One (1) representative of CEGENSA
- One (1) representative of the School of Law
- Two (2) representatives of Convocation (one of whom should be non-teaching)
- Two (2) student representatives (one [1] from the Student's Representative Council, SRC and one [1] from the Graduate Students' Association of Ghana, GRSAG)

- One (1) representative of Senior staff (from FUSSAG or SSA-UoG)
- One (1) Representative of Junior staff (from TEWU)
- Two (2) persons external to the University with expertise in Equal Opportunity matters
- The EOB Administrator (ex-officio, non-voting).
- Other ex-officio members can be appointed to act as technical advisors from time to time.

6.6.3. Secretariat

The EOB shall have a secretariat with a full time Administrator to process applications, maintain records and provide administrative support to the Board. The secretariat shall be located at CEGENSA which shall be provided with requisite staff and facilities to support the realization of the EOB's objectives.

6.6.4. Member specifications

- The Chair of the EOB shall be a member of the University community who has demonstrated evidence of gender-sensitivity, has high credibility and appropriate technical competencies necessary for handling gender discrimination within the University community.
- The external members shall be persons, not employees or students of the University, with the requisite expertise in equal opportunity matters.
- The representatives of the University community shall comprise male and female senior members, staff and students and must also demonstrate evidence of being gender sensitive.
- There shall be gender parity in the composition of the EOB.

At the start of each academic year, the University community shall be notified of the membership of the EOB and of their terms of reference (TORs). Members shall undergo an orientation before assuming office.

6.6.5. Responsibilities

The EOB shall have implementation, monitoring, adjudicative and promotional powers and shall thus perform the following functions aimed at promoting the Gender Policy and ensuring gender mainstreaming in the University:

- (i) Conduct periodic gender audits and make recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor for consideration by the appropriate bodies and the Council.
- (ii) Prepare guidelines and recommend actions for the implementation of the Gender Policy.
- (iii) Hear Individual/Group complaints about non-compliance with the Gender Policy through the Administrator.

- (iv) Design and organise training and orientation programmes on gender sensitivity for members of the University Community.
- (v) Monitor and evaluate all activities related to the Gender Policy.

6.6.6. Term of Office

- With the exception of officers who are members of the EOB by virtue of their official capacities, members of the EOB appointed in a representative capacity with the exception of student's representatives shall serve for a term of two (2) years, after which they can be appointed to serve a further two (2)-year term only.
- Student representatives shall serve a term of one (1) year as per the SRC and GRASAG terms for office holders.
- The Chair shall serve a first term of three (3) years, after which s/he may be reappointed to serve a further term of two (2) years only.

6.6.7. Meetings

The EOB shall meet at least once per semester.

6.6.8. Reporting

The EOB shall prepare and submit an Annual Report on its work at the end of each academic year to the University Council through Academic Board and the Vice-Chancellor.

7. Individual/Group Complaints Mechanism – Raising of concerns

7.1. Procedure

- (a) Concerns with non-compliance with the policy shall be raised by employees with an immediate superior, including Head of a Department, School or College, Human Resources personnel or directly with the Administrator of the EOB. For example, where the complaint is against an immediate superior, the complaint can be lodged directly with the Administrator of EOB.
- (b) Complaints by students shall be raised with a Head of Department, School or College, also with a Hall Master/Warden, Senior Tutor or Tutor of a Hall of residence, Dean of Student Affairs, the SRC or GRASAG or directly with the Administrator of the EOB.
- (c) Concerns that relate to the policy arising from matters before other committees within the University shall be referred directly to the Administrator of the EOB.
- (d) Complaints may be raised in writing or orally. In the latter instance, whoever receives the complaint shall document the concern. Prompt reporting shall be encouraged to enable the Administrator to refer the matter to the Board for prompt action. The grievance procedures set out in Annex II shall be followed.

- (e) Concerns raised before immediate supervisors that are not adequately addressed shall be raised directly with the EOB.

7.2. Role of the EOB

The EOB shall have the following responsibilities under the complaints mechanism:

- (a) Documentation: The EOB shall maintain records of reports of gender discrimination and non-compliance with policy and actions taken in response to reports, including records of investigations, voluntary resolutions, and disciplinary action taken. The Administrator shall ensure that documentation is kept securely.
- (b) Investigations: The EOB shall deal with specific complaints of gender discrimination as an investigative body in accordance with the grievance procedure set out in the policy. It shall submit a report of its investigations with recommended actions to the Vice-Chancellor, subject to section 12 of this policy, for formal action to be taken in line with the University's Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure.
- (c) Reporting: The Board shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Academic Board through the Vice-Chancellor in relation to its work.

7.3. Rights of the Complainant(s)

Anyone who feels aggrieved by any treatment which goes against the tenets of the Gender Policy shall have the right to pursue the matter and utilize the procedures described under this policy for redress. Complainant(s) shall not be reprimanded, victimized in any way or suffer any adverse consequences for initiating an inquiry or complaint in good faith.

Individuals or groups of persons who make reports that are later found to have been fabricated or maliciously made without regard to the truth shall be subjected to disciplinary action as per the University's Disciplinary procedures.

7.4. Rights of the Respondent(s)

A person or groups against whom a complaint is lodged shall be presumed innocent of the complaint unless and until found responsible by the EOB after due process or following an admission of culpability to the complaint levelled against him/her/them.

8. Promotion of the Gender Policy

8.1. Dissemination of information on Gender Policy

The EOB, with support from CEGENSA, shall outline and implement yearly activities to promote the dissemination of the gender policy throughout the University. Stakeholders (i.e. employees and students) shall be consulted from time to time about their experiences of the policy and account shall be taken of relevant information in order to address any lapses in the policy or its implementation.

8.2. Gathering of information

The EOB shall receive comments from the University community and also gather information on gender issues and the application of the gender policy within the University. Information on how the University's policies and practices affect gender equality shall be included in the Annual report.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

9.1. Development of Annual Workplan and Budget

The measurement of progress of implementation of the Gender Policy shall be based on clear criteria to be developed by the Board. The monitoring process shall be supported by an Annual Workplan and Budget by the EOB which shall be subject to approval by the University Council. The workplan and budget shall assist the setting of targets for the delivery of outputs with linked inputs, activities and outcomes.

9.2. Yearly Gender Audits

The EOB shall undertake yearly gender audits of the University in collaboration with CEGENSA and produce a report with recommendations to be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor for the consideration of the University Council.

9.3. Evaluation of the Gender Policy

The EOB shall evaluate the implementation and impact of the University's gender policies and practices on gender equality every four years.

9.4. Gender Equality Annual Report

To publish a Gender Equality Annual Report summarising cases handled and the report of the gender audit.

10. Version Control and Change History

The Gender Policy shall be reviewed after every five (5) years to take into account emerging issues and trends.

Version Control	Date Released	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	March 14, 2023	August 11, 2022	Council	

APPENDIX

11. Offenses

It is an offense to discriminate against any member of the University Community or subject any person to an unfair treatment on the basis of gender. A conduct constituting an offense may be determined from time to time. In the meantime it shall be an offense to:

- i. Make sexist remarks to one or more persons in private or in public.
- ii. Deny anyone promotion, grade, or award on grounds of one's gender.
- iii. Dismiss, terminate an employee's contract, apply sanctions, deny of privileges, opportunities or grades or threat of same on grounds of one's gender or on the basis that the person has complained or reported an incident of gender discrimination or passed a fair comment on any matter, including an issue bordering on the application of this policy
- iv. Discriminate against a member of the University on the basis of pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions.
- v. Deny an employee entitled to leave for care work (childcare/elder care) on grounds of the person's gender (e.g. denying a male entitled to leave for care work).
- vi. Introduce rules that consciously or unconsciously have or are likely to have a negative impact on a person or group of persons of one gender.
- vii. Subject a person to an act of gender-based violence whether physical (including assault, deprivation of liberty), psychological, emotional, economic or sexual in nature, including coercive or transactional sex, rape or sexual assault.
- viii. Subject a member of the University including a subordinate or student to an unfair treatment on the basis of the person's gender
- ix. Refuse, delay without just cause or frustrate attempts to address a complaint or report of gender discrimination.

12. Grievance Procedures

Complainant(s) of any gender related offences provided in this Policy or other gender related discriminatory act may complain either formally or informally. The complainant(s) may also decide to move from any grievance approach hereunder to the other.

The following guidelines shall apply in the handling of complaints regarding the commission of an offense under the Gender Policy. The procedures herein equally apply to cases with a group of complainants who believe they collectively have been the target of gender-based discrimination or have not been treated in accordance with the Gender Policy.

(i) Informal approach

- (a) Where a member of the University community feels that s/he has suffered from non-compliance with the policy, s/he may attempt to resolve the matter directly with the alleged offender(s) by pointing out the wrongful or unfair act.
- (b) Complainant(s) may choose to ask a superior or a trusted person to intervene on their behalf. The intervenor may provide advice or counselling to the parties involved. This shall be on a strictly confidential basis and the discussion shall be limited to the specific request made by the complainant(s).
- (c) Complainant(s) may request through the Administrator to the EOB that an attempt be made to resolve a complaint by way of mediation. The Administrator, upon receiving the complaint, shall inquire if the respondent(s) is/are willing to engage in mediation. If so, a mediator shall be selected by mutual agreement of the Complainant(s) and the Respondent(s). The mediator shall report the outcome of the process to the Administrator who shall subsequently file a report to the EOB. If the matter is not resolved, the EOB shall advise the Complainant(s) to file a formal complaint.
- (d) In cases of gender-based discrimination which amount to sexual harassment under the Sexual Harassment & Misconduct Policy, the Complainant(s) shall be advised or assisted to lodge a formal complaint with the Anti-Sexual Harassment Committee.
- (e) In cases of acts of gender-based discrimination that are of a grievous nature and may result in loss of employment of the complainant or cause irreparable harm to the complainant(s), the informal complaint mechanism shall not apply. Instead, complainant(s) shall be counselled to lodge a formal complaint to the Board.
- (f) The EOB shall recommend to the Vice-Chancellor, subject to section 12 of this policy document, to refer a matter, whether the EOB has investigated or not and depending on its nature, to the National Labour Commission, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, the Ghana Police Service, or any other relevant body for further action.

(ii) Formal Approach 1: Lodging and receiving formal complaints

- (a) A member of the University community who is being or has been the subject of gender-based discrimination and is dissatisfied with the outcome of an informal approach previously utilised shall make a formal complaint to the EOB for redress
- (b) A victim of gender-based discrimination may also lodge a formal complaint without the need to exhaust an informal process first.
- (c) The Complainant(s) shall present her or his grievance orally or in writing to the Administrator. The Administrator, on receiving the complaint, shall discuss and explain to the Complainant(s) all options and processes available in the formal grievance procedure. This process shall not constitute an adjudication of the matter.
- (d) The Administrator shall immediately forward the complaint to the Chair of the EOB. In the case of a Complainant who is unable to write, the Administrator

- shall assist him or her to write the complaint. The written complaint shall then be read to the complainant(s) and interpreted to him/her/them in the language s/he/they understand(s) before the signing or thumbprinting of the complaint.
- (e) The written statement shall give details of the alleged discriminatory behaviour or non-compliance with the Gender Policy, and if possible, give details of dates, places and names of those connected with the incident(s). Any documentary evidence to support the complainants' case (for example, video and or audio recordings, written statements, comments, remarks, etc) may be added.
 - (f) The EOB shall notify the Respondent(s) about the matter and request that s/he file a written statement in response to the allegation(s) within seven days. In the case of the Respondent's inability to write, s/he shall be assisted to do so.
 - (g) The EOB shall set up a panel to hear the matter before the Complainant(s), the Respondent(s) and their representatives, if available. Proceedings may be viva voce or in writing and shall be recorded in writing.
 - (h) The Complainant shall be heard first in the presence of the Respondent(s). The Respondent(s) may exercise the right to cross-examine the Complainant. The Respondent(s) may then be requested to make her/his/their oral statement(s) to state his/her/their side of the matter.
 - (i) The EOB may take testimonies of other relevant persons and witnesses where available and review the evidence.
 - (j) The EOB may conduct its own investigations into the matter, apart from considering the written and verbal testimonies of the parties.
 - (k) A recommendation shall be taken after careful review of the circumstances, evidence adduced, statements made and all other relevant information available to the Board.
 - (l) Any dissenting opinion among the Board members shall be recorded together with the reasons for the dissent.
 - (m) Where a Respondent(s) is/are found to have engaged in gender discriminatory acts or to have violated the tenets of the Gender Policy, the Board shall submit recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor, subject to Section 12 of this policy document, for appropriate action to be taken.

(iii) Formal Approach 2: Complaints against the University generally

- (a) Any individual(s) who have a complaint of non-compliance with this policy against the University in general shall lodge a written complaint with the Administrator.
- (b) The written statement shall give details of the alleged discriminatory practice, and if possible, give details of dates, places and names of those connected with the complaint.
- (c) If oral, the complaint shall be reduced into writing by the Administrator or recorded and transcribed.

- (d) The Administrator shall review it and seek clarification on any part of it from the person or group members. The Officer shall discuss all options with the Complainant as well as explain the processes involved in the formal grievance procedure.
- (e) The EOB shall notify the Respondent about the matter and request that s/he files a written statement in response to the allegation(s) within seven [7] days.
- (f) The EOB shall conduct its own investigations into the matter and take evidence from officers within the University who have a role to play with regards to the complaint including verbal interrogations/questioning with the Complainant. All proceedings shall be recorded in writing.
- (g) The EOB shall consider the evidence gathered.
- (h) A decision shall be taken after careful review of the circumstances, evidence adduced, statements and all other relevant information before the Board.
- (i) Any dissenting opinion among the Board members shall be recorded together with the reasons for the dissent.
- (j) The EOB shall make recommendations on the matter to the Vice Chancellor for action to be taken.

(iv) Other relevant considerations for the work of the Board

a. Adjudicative process

- (i) The rules of natural justice (principles of fairness and impartiality), formality, dignity and order shall apply to all adjudicative proceedings of all matters before the EOB.
- (ii) A formal adjudication process shall be conducted at all times and parties shall address themselves to the EOB.
- (iii) Where provision is not expressly made by these Rules regarding the practice and procedure applicable to any matter before the EOB, the EOB shall determine the practice and procedure to be adopted which in its opinion may be necessary in determining the matter before it.
- (iv) The EOB shall, upon receipt of the formal or informal complaint, adjudicate the matter within 21 working days from the date of receipt.
- (v) Notice of the date and time for hearing of a matter shall be sent to all panel members and parties involved and any other person considered relevant to appear before the EOB at a date, time and place specified in the Notice. The date for the hearing shall not be less than seven (7) working days from the date of the notice.
- (vi) The Respondent may appear in person or via virtual means alone or with a validly licensed lawyer, or with any other person of his or her choice and at his or her own expense
- (vii) At the first hearing of each case, the Chairperson of the Board shall
 - inform the Respondent the complaint made against him/her
 - ask the Respondent whether he or she objects to any of the panel members and the basis of the objection.

- ask the Respondent if he or she wants to make any oral submissions aside the written response already submitted and whether he intends to call any witnesses.

b. Evidence

The following may be considered as evidence during the hearing of the matter:

1. Written detailed account of the Complainant(s) and the Respondent(s).
2. Statements of witnesses (if any).
3. Statements of persons with whom the Complainant(s) might have discussed the incident, or from whom advice may have been sought.
4. Any other documentation, including audios, visuals, e-mails, short message service (SMS), WhatsApp messages, information from other social media platforms, etc. Expert technical advice may be sought for such submissions.
5. In the absence or refusal of a Respondent to appear before the panel or respond to the panel in writing, the hearing of a complaint may be based solely on the credibility of the Complainant's allegation if it is sufficiently detailed and internally consistent.
6. Evidence shall also include evidence given by an expert witness and the evidentiary rules given by an expert witness shall apply.

c. Withdrawal of a filed complaint

A Complainant may withdraw a complaint filed with the Board any time after filing and during the process of the investigation. In such a case the Complainant shall state in writing the reasons for the withdrawal of the complaint and append her/his signature to the statement.

d. Conduct of EOB Members

- (i) Where any member of the EOB has a potential conflict of interest in a particular case, such a member shall recuse her/himself.
- (ii) EOB members shall maintain confidentiality of all matters reported to it and its proceedings.
- (iii) EOB members shall conduct themselves with integrity and refrain from any actions that may bring the name of the Board into disrepute.

e. Complaints against a member of the EOB

- (i) Where a complaint is made against a member of the EOB, s/he shall not be part of any of the processes of the Board relating to the investigation of the complaint.
- (ii) Where a Complainant or Respondent questions the impartiality of a member of the EOB, that member shall not be allowed to participate in the investigation of the particular case.

PROVIDED that in all the instances stated above, when the EOB member challenges the validity of the objection raised against him/her

by a Complainant(s), evidence shall be taken and a decision made as to whether or not the EOB member can participate in the proceedings or otherwise.

f. Refusal to cooperate with the EOB

Where a Respondent(s) or Complainant(s) fails to respond to the request of the EOB or in any other way obstructs the work of the Board, the Board shall proceed to decide the case based on the evidence available, after issuing three notices in writing to the non-cooperating party.

g. Refusal of Respondent(s) to respond to notice of filed complaint or to participate in enquiry

The Board shall proceed to hear a complaint and adjudicate on the matter before it even where a Respondent(s) refuses to respond to the allegations or participate in the enquiry process.

h. Record of Proceedings

The Board's record of proceedings on a particular matter shall give details of the enquiry. This shall include a statement of the allegations and issues, the position of the parties, a summary of the evidence, findings of fact, and a determination by the Board as to whether a University policy has been violated. Where no adverse findings are made against the Respondent, the record shall also contain, where applicable, other recommendations made to the parties for actions to restore or improve their relationship. The record may be used as evidence in other related procedures, such as subsequent complaints before the EOB, other investigative Board or Committees, charges before the Disciplinary Committee or appeals before the Appeals Board.

i. Decision-making

The investigation procedure shall be completed as promptly as possible and in most cases within 60 working days of the date the request for formal investigation was filed.

j. Appeal

A party dissatisfied with the decision of the EOB upon an appeal may further appeal to the University's Appeals Board established under the University of Ghana Act, 2010 (Act 806).

k. Non-retaliation

During the process of investigation of a matter, retaliation from either party shall be strictly monitored by the Board. An individual who is subjected to retaliation for having made a complaint in good faith, assisting someone with a complaint, or participating in any manner in an investigation, is entitled to make a report of retaliation under these procedures. Acts of retaliation may include threats, intimidation, or acts that adversely affect employment or education prospects. A report of retaliation shall be treated as a report of non-compliance with the policy and shall be subject to action under the Gender Policy.

I. Confidentiality

All parties to an investigation, including their representatives, shall maintain confidentiality to protect the integrity of the proceedings.

m. Referral for counseling or other psycho-social support

In appropriate cases, the Board may request that a person participating in any investigations seeks counselling or support from a designated institution or personnel. The Board may also, at the request of a party to the matter, refer that party to the appropriate institution or personnel for counselling or other psycho-social support.

n. Rights of the Complainant and/or Respondent to seek external redress

No aspect of this Policy shall operate to prejudice the rights of the parties to use other available legal mechanisms, such as the Police, the Courts, the National Labour Commission, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, to enforce or protect their rights in a gender discrimination matter.

13. Referral of matter to Council

Where the Vice-Chancellor is alleged to be in violation of any provision of this policy, the matter shall be referred to the University Council for appropriate action to be taken.

