



Student Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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Table of Contents

Click on the section header to be taken straight to the corresponding page.

Introduction.....	3
Purpose.....	3
Scope.....	3
Responsibilities	3
Definitions	4
References.....	4
Policy	5
Intent.....	5
Principles	5
Equality Impact Assessment	8
Bullying and Harassment	8
Appendix A – Document Control Information	10

Introduction

Purpose

Unite Students believes in providing an environment in which students can thrive, where each of us treats one another with mutual respect and dignity. This policy states our commitment to equality and diversity and outlines the rights and responsibilities to which all members of the Unite community are expected to adhere.

Scope

This policy applies to the entire Unite Students community, including employees and students.

Responsibilities

Employees:

- Employees have a responsibility to guard against any form of discrimination. They must always demonstrate behaviour and actions that do not discriminate unlawfully.
- Employees will be honest, sincere, and respectful in offering their contributions and points of view.
- Employees will endeavour to understand others, by actively listening and being open to diversity of styles and perspectives.
- Employees will always strive to create an inclusive and supportive environment for everyone, exemplifying the values of the Home Charter.
- Employees are responsible for raising concerns about unlawful discrimination with their line manager.

Students:

- All students have a responsibility to speak out, or report, if they are witness to or are aware of discrimination, unfair treatment, or harassment
- All students must take equal responsibility in creating an environment of mutual respect, where people feel valued.
- All students are responsible for respecting the diversity of their local community and upholding the core values of the Home Charter.

External Contractors and Service Providers:

- All contractors and service providers employed by Unite Students must comply with this policy. Unite Students is responsible for making contractors and service providers aware of the principles in this policy

Student Services and Welfare:

- Responsible for supporting students about issues associated with equality, diversity, harassment and bullying.
- Responsible for supporting and advising colleagues to ensure that we are treating students fairly in terms of our student facing policies, including Disability and Student Mental Health.

Estates, Projects and Property Development:

- Responsible for ensuring new and existing buildings are accessible and inclusive.

Definitions

D&I – Diversity and Inclusion.

EIA – Equality Impact Assessment. An evidence-based tool, which enables us to consider the likely impact of work on different groups of people.

Harassment – unwanted behaviour, which is offensive, or makes a person feel intimidated or humiliated.

References

- Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- uS Student Disability Policy
- uS Student Mental Health Policy
- uS Bullying and Harassment Policy
- uS Equality Impact Assessment
- [Home Charter](#)

Policy

Intent

Unite Students is a business that strives to be welcoming and inclusive to all; 'Creating Room for Everyone' is one of our core company values. We work together to provide an environment that enables everyone to be their true selves, where they feel they belong.

This policy is about promoting positive attitudes and supportive communities; a statement of our commitment to embracing diversity.

Principles

Unite Students celebrates diversity by fostering an inclusive environment where we can all feel safe and understood; free from any prejudice.

All members and prospective members of our community have a responsibility to:

- Treat each other and the wider community with respect
- Engage each other in conversation while respecting and valuing each other's differences
- Provide a supportive environment; one with equal opportunity where everyone can participate

These values form the foundation of our [Home Charter](#), recognising how we must each make a commitment to creating a positive and inclusive community. We recognise the responsibility for everyone, whether employee or student, to uphold the principles of this policy.

a) Age

- Unite Students celebrates the diversity of students of all ages and seeks to ensure that they are all treated fairly.
- Unite Students aims to be inclusive while continuing to offer the highest level of safety standards. Our Under 18 policy outlines how we allocate and induct under-18's within our properties.
- Unite Students will not tolerate age discrimination and does not operate with any maximum age requirements. We can discuss any additional needs or requirements on an individual basis.

b) Disability

- Unite Students is committed to using inclusive practices which match our university partners, removing any barriers to participation, academically and socially.
- Our Student Disability policy outlines how we ensure students with impairments or long-term health needs living in Unite properties have access to facilities comparable to their non-disabled peers.
- Our Student Services team will work together with students to assess reasonable adjustments and escalate more complex cases as needed.
- Our Estates and Property Development teams will ensure that our properties remain accessible and inclusive.

c) Gender reassignment

- Unite Students will ensure we provide a home and environment where all transgender students are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.
- Unite Students will continue to work closely with partners who support us in creating safe spaces for students and employees to be their authentic selves.

d) Marriage and civil partnership

- Unite Students aims to treat any student in a marriage or civil partnership fairly and with respect.
- While Unite Students is not able to offer any student a dual occupancy, we are supportive and open to discourse to the individual needs of our students.

e) Pregnancy and Maternity

- Unite Students recognises how vital it is to support students during pregnancy. Our Student Services team will signpost students to relevant support services, including those offered by their university.
- In fulfilment of our commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our residents, Unite Students does not offer accommodation to under-16's.
- We will provide a supportive and open environment for students to discuss their living arrangements with us.

f) Race

- Unite Students recognises that structural, systematic, and everyday racism still exists in our wider society. We remain committed to tackling racial discrimination and providing a positive experience to all regardless of ethnic or racial background.
- Unite Students welcomes everyone into our community and asks that our students join us in celebrating the richness that our D&I culture brings.
- Unite Students has signed the Business in the Community 'Race at Work Charter' to take positive steps forward and stop the significant disparities in employment and progression of ethnic minority staff.

g) Gender Identity

- Unite Students will strive to eliminate gender bias within its operational and business practices.
- Unite Students will continue to work with students to raise awareness of gender equality issues. We will demonstrate a willingness to learn and engage with issues to ensure we continue to advance our equality strategies.

h) Sexual Orientation

- Unite Students celebrates and values all students and employees, recognising the diversity of gender identity.
- Unite Students will provide a supportive and inclusive social environment where everyone feels valued.
- Unite Students will continue to work with valued partners such as Stonewall to promote equal opportunities and experience for the student and employee members of our community, regardless of their sexual orientation.

i) Religion or Belief

- Under the Equality Act 2010, references to religion and belief include any religious or philosophical belief, or lack of religion or belief.

- The Human Rights Act 1998 states everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion including the right to manifest religion or belief in worship, teaching, practise and observance.
- Unite Students is home to a diverse international community of people of varying religious and other beliefs. Unite Students supports facilitating the free practise of religion by its employees and students.
- Unite Students will not treat any individual less favourably on grounds of religion or belief.
- Unite Students will respect all religious and other faith-based beliefs. However, people while giving expression to their belief should be sensitive in seeking to spread their religious belief, avoiding any action which suggests coercion or an infringement on the rights of others.

Behaviour that offends or intimidates another person on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation will constitute harassment.

Equality Impact Assessment

While this policy looks to outline the universal application of these principles, the Equality Impact Assessment is focused on ensuring specific policies, services, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation. As an organisation we will be inclusive by design when developing change initiatives, both in the way we work and the services we provide.

We will conduct an Equality Impact Assessment to assess the possible effect of change initiatives, in a structured and consistent manner, on each protected characteristic. In addition, family structure will also be included in consideration of our customer demographic.

Service experiences will naturally vary for different people; we are all individual. The aim of this process is to therefore identify barriers, assumptions and bias to remove, or significantly reduce the likelihood of negative impact.

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying is defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behaviour through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.



Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation), which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Unite Students is committed to providing a welcoming and respectful community to all, in which everyone is treated with dignity. Any report of bullying or harassment will be investigated in line with our behaviour management process, or internal disciplinary procedure. Potential sanctions and outcomes will follow proportionate to the grievance and in consideration of any potential mitigation offered by the student or employee.

Appendix A – Document Control Information

Document Management			
Document Ref / Title		Student Diversity and Inclusion Policy	
Version #	1.0	Status	New policy - in draft
Classification		Public (everyone has access)	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Finance - AR	<input type="checkbox"/> Finance - Treasury	<input type="checkbox"/> InfoSec	<input type="checkbox"/> HR
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance - AP	<input type="checkbox"/> Procurement	<input type="checkbox"/> H&S	<input type="checkbox"/> Sales
<input type="checkbox"/> Estates	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/> Asset Management
<input type="checkbox"/> Digital	<input type="checkbox"/> Office Support	<input type="checkbox"/> PMO	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Intelligence
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Finance	<input type="checkbox"/> Acquisition / Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Version History (copy and paste from top section to here as a record)			
Version	Date approved	Author	Summary of changes
1.0	28/10/2020	Sarah Dixon	New policy

This table is to be used to record all revisions made to this document. Changes made should also be recorded on the Business Management System.