



AMITY UNIVERSITY KOLKATA

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND NON- DISCRIMINATORY POLICY GUIDELINES

Version	Prepared By	Date of Preparation	Approved by	Date of Approval
1	Registrar office	05 Dec 2018	Academic council	11 Feb 2019
2	Gender Committee & IQAC	20 Dec 2023	Academic council	11 Feb 2024

G-35: EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY GUIDELINES

With the goal of eradicating prejudice against any segment of society and promoting "Equity" among students, employees, applicants, and service providers, Amity University, Kolkata (AUK) therefore notifies Policy Guidelines for Equality, Diversity, and Non-discrimination.

1. Short Title, Application and Commencement

- This policy is an updation to “Equity, Diversity and Non-Discriminatory Policy Guidelines”, 2019, reflecting the ammendments made in 2024 (the “Policy” hereafter).
- This Policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, applicants, and service providers of Amity University, Kolkata.
- These guidelines shall come into force with effect from the date of notification.

2. Objective

The objective of the Policy is to:

- To foster a welcoming and inclusive environment that celebrates diversity.
- To promote equity in opportunities and treatment for all members of the University community.
- To prevent and prohibit discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics.
- To ensure fair and transparent processes in admissions, employment, and academic pursuits.

3. Definition

In these AUK Guidelines, unless the context otherwise requires:

- “Protect characteristics” shall refer to age, caste, creed, religion, language, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, marital status or disability of an individual.
- “Equity” shall mean equal opportunity and a level playing field for all students and employees in respect of any opportunity and entitlement ensuring inclusivity, for the enjoyment of all legitimate rights.
- “Discrimination” is unjust or prejudicial treatment of a person or group based on a protected characteristic, which includes, but is not limited to;
 - Denying rights to a student/ employee/ applicant/ service provider or a group of students/ employees/ applicants/ service providers based on their protected characteristics,
 - impressing undignified conditions on any of these parties; and

- establishing or maintaining separate educational systems or institutions for them.
- “Harassment” shall mean any persistent unwelcome behavior, that dehumanizes, demeans, humiliates, creates a hostile and intimidating environment, and/or causes mental agony and disturbance;
- “Victimization” shall mean any unfair treatment of a student/employee/ applicant/ service provider based on their protected characteristics.
- “Unfavorable treatment” shall mean any adverse situation in the working environment, denial of training, denial of opportunities for advancement, unfavourable reports, vexatious grievances and exclusion by peers.

4. Actions that may be attributed to Harassment or Victimization

- Unwanted physical contact, verbal abuse, or threats.
- Offensive jokes, derogatory remarks, or slurs about someone's background as a reason for under-performance.
- Unwelcome sexual advances or propositions.
- Exclusion or isolation from others in the hostel/ mess/ reading room/ common room/ playground/ cafeteria and/or any other student amenities including drinking water facilities, based on protected characteristics.
- Retaliation for reporting discrimination or harassment
- Allotting differential or private meeting time, keeping someone idle, earmarking separate seats, or following differential treatment based on caste, creed, region, or religion.
- Withholding information, improper performance assessments, delaying results, stopping fellowships, and segregating from others.
- Indulging in acts of financial extortion, disrupting regular activities, and/or ragging (the cases of ragging shall be dealt with separately, as per Regulations of AUK)
- Not allowing participation in cultural or sports events.

5. Commitments towards Equality, Diversity and Non-Discrimination

- **Equal Opportunity:**

The university is committed to providing equal opportunities to all students, employees, and service providers, regardless of sex, race, creed, caste, or class. This policy applies to all aspects of education and employment practices, including recruiting, selection, placement, compensation, training, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, and termination. The selection and treatment of individuals will be based solely on their merits, abilities, and potential. The leave rules will be applicable to all staff as per the HR leave policy, which includes casual, sick, earned, maternity, paternity, study and other leaves.

- **Diversity**

The university believes diversity fosters creativity, innovation, and excellence. It is committed to principles of diversity and will comply with all affirmative action requirements, per law, to be consistent with its obligations for minorities, women and persons with disabilities.

- **Non-Discrimination**

Amity University does not discriminate or tolerate harassment based on sex, race, creed, caste or class towards any student, applicant, service provider, or employee. This policy applies to all university practices including but not limited to, admission, education, recruitment, promotion, transfer, salary, training, development, demotion, and separation.

University policy also prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports discrimination/harassment, or helps someone do so, or participates in an investigation or resolution of such a complaint. Retaliation includes threats, intimidation, reprisals and adverse actions related to employment.

6. Procedure to seek support

- Students, parents of students, or university staff members experiencing non-equitable treatment, discrimination, harassment, victimization, or unfavorable treatment as defined by the guidelines may file a written complaint.
- The complaint must contain sufficient details of the alleged act and be addressed to the respective designated authority of the committee.
- The committee shall include:
 - Professor as Presiding Officer / Chairperson
 - Two-Three faculty as Member
 - Co-opted Members – Three-Four student representatives
- Upon receipt of a written complaint, the respective designated authority shall initiate follow-up action, including a preliminary fact-finding inquiry if necessary.
- Based on the inquiry report and the recommendation submitted by the respective designated authority, in the case of students and/or staff, appropriate action per the provisions of the statutes, ordinances, and/or regulations of AUK in force, shall be initiated.
- The complaint should be resolved within 60 days of its filing.

6.1. Punishments

Individuals found guilty of violating this policy will be subject to the following disciplinary action:

- verbal or written warnings, suspension, expulsion, or withholding of transcripts

for students, and

- verbal or written warnings, probation, suspension, termination of employment, or reduction in rank for faculty/staff.

6.2. Appeal

The aggrieved individuals can appeal decisions they disagree with.

- Appeals must be in writing, stating reasons, and sent to the Registrar within ninety working days of the decision. The Registrar will act as the Member Secretary to the Appellant Committee, which will be chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or Vice Chancellor
- The appeal may also be considered after the expiry of ninety days, subject to a valid reason for a late appeal request, on approval of the Registrar.
- Within a reasonable timeframe, the Registrar shall review and make necessary recommendations to the competent authority per the Act/ Statutes/ Regulations of AUK.
- The appeal may be rejected if found irrelevant, and the records for the dismissal are to be recorded.

7. Functions of the committee:

- Develop and implement strategies to promote equity, diversity, and non-discrimination.
- Provide clear and accessible information about this Policy to all members of the University community.
- formulate a transparent procedure for dealing with such complaints and disseminate the same on the website.
- conduct awareness events on the importance of equality and value-based education amongst students and staff, constitutional provisions and protective measures in respect of students/ employees/ applicants belonging to SC/ ST categories.

8. Responsibility

Creating an inclusive and harmonious campus environment is the basic responsibility of all campus personnel, including the registrar, Deans, Directors, HoDs/HoIs, teachers, staff, and students. The responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Registrar
 - **Overseeing fair and inclusive admissions:** Ensure all admission materials and procedures are free from bias, eliminating any discriminatory language or practices.
 - **Building a Diverse Student Body:** Proactively attracting a diverse student body by developing and implementing outreach programs

- **Collaboration for Equal Access:** By working with deans and department/institute heads, the registrar shall ensure all academic programs are accessible to students, regardless of background
- **Ensuring Policy Effectiveness:** Providing strong leadership, guiding the implementation of the policy goals and ensuring everyone involved understands their responsibilities towards creating an inclusive environment.
- Deans/Directors/Heads of Departments
 - **Cultivating Inclusive Learning Environments:** Fostering a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere within their departments where all students feel valued and respected.
 - **Building a Diverse Faculty:** Actively recruiting and retaining faculty members from a wide range of backgrounds is crucial for enriching the learning experience and offering students diverse perspectives.
 - **Inclusive Curriculum Development:** Ensuring course curricula are inclusive and incorporate diverse perspectives allows students to engage with a broader range of knowledge and viewpoints.
 - **Addressing Discrimination and Harassment:** Ensuring a prompt and effective response to any reported incidents of discrimination or harassment within the departments.
 - **Collaboration and Support:** Collaborate with other offices to implement the annual action plan and raise awareness about EDI responsibilities among faculty, staff, and students.
- Faculty
 - Treating all students and staff with dignity and respect, creating a classroom environment where everyone feels valued and heard.
 - Promoting respectful interactions and fostering inclusivity in teaching methods materials, and classroom discussions.
 - Avoiding bias in grading and evaluation practices by ensuring that the assessments are objective and reflect student merit, not personal background.
 - Reporting any suspected discrimination or harassment.
 - Advocating for equitable access to professional development opportunities for all staff members
- Staff
 - Providing equal and courteous service to all members of the University community.
 - Recruiting and hiring staff based on merit and qualifications.
 - Upholding this Policy in all employment practices i.e., promotion, training, and compensation.
 - Should be aware of and actively challenge discriminatory behavior and attitudes in the workplace.
 - Reporting incidents of discrimination or harassment, if witnessed or experienced in

any form i.e., bullying, or unfair treatment.

- Attending staff development programs, allows staff to stay updated on relevant legislation and best practices

- Students

- Challenge and/or report discrimination effectively
- Express opinions constructively
- Participate in creating a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Active participation in creating such a classroom and campus culture that values diversity and fosters a sense of belonging for everyone.

9. Monitoring and Review

The Committee will monitor the implementation of this Policy and recommend revisions as needed. The Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness. The Audit Officer, as may be authorized, will periodically audit and monitor compliance with this policy.

10. Saving

In the event of any conflict between these Guidelines and the provisions of statutory authorities in the country or established law of the land, the latter shall prevail and supersede these Guidelines.

Note: In continuation with the scope of the above policy, the guidelines given by the Govt of India, State Govt of West Bengal and of the UGC will also be followed to address the issues mentioned in this policy. The policies/ regulations given by the UGC to promote the equality and diversity are:

- a. Regulation for Greivance Redressal
- b. Anti Ragging
- c. Promotion of cultural harmony
- d. UGC regulation for appointment of faculty & staff
