



UniMAC
UNIVERSITY OF MEDIA, ARTS AND COMMUNICATION

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GENDER, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION POLICY

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FOREWORD

The University of Media, Arts and Communication (UniMAC) is committed to fostering an academic environment that is inclusive, equitable, and empowering for all and sundry. As a higher educational institution, UniMAC recognises the need for diversity and aims to be a fundamental pillar of academic excellence as well as a catalyst for innovation, progress, and social transformation. This Gender, Disability, and Social Inclusion Policy is a testament of UniMAC's steadfast dedication to creating an environment where all (regardless of gender, disability, colour, background, socio-economic status) has the chance to thrive. The university forms an integral part of society and thrives on ensuring that fairness, dignity, and respect are upheld at all times and in all areas of the university, from admissions and academic engagement to employment and leadership opportunities.

This policy has, therefore, been carefully crafted to address systemic barriers and provide actionable frameworks for promoting inclusion at all levels. The policy is in line with national and global standard practices and ensures that UniMAC exceeds the expectations of equity and social justice at all levels. Through the implementation of this policy, the university reaffirms its commitment to gender equity and social inclusion for all by eliminating discrimination and biases and instead fostering a culture of belonging for all members of the university community.

A heartfelt appreciation to the Gender, Disability, and Social Inclusion Policy Committee and all stakeholders who contributed their expertise, insights, and lived experiences to the development of this essential document. Hopefully this policy will serve as a blueprint for meaningful change, ensuring that UniMAC remains a beacon of inclusivity and excellence. All members of the university community are encouraged to uphold the values enshrined in this policy and create a learning and working environment where diversity is celebrated, inclusion is the norm, and no one is left behind.

Prof. Eric Opoku Mensah

Vice Chancellor - University of Media, Arts and Communication

Definitions

- i. **Affirmative Action:** Policies and practices aimed at increasing opportunities for historically disadvantaged groups, including women.
- ii. **Equality:** Treat everyone equally by giving them the same resources and opportunities, regardless of their starting position.
- iii. **Equity:** Equity ensures fairness by addressing systemic barriers and providing individuals with what they need to succeed. It recognises that different groups may require different resources or support to achieve similar outcomes.
- iv. **Gender:** Social, cultural, psychological and behavioural aspects associated with being male or female.
- v. **Gender Budgeting:** A strategy that ensures public resources are allocated fairly between genders by assessing how budgets impact men and women differently.
- vi. **Gender Mainstreaming:** An approach that integrates a gender perspective into all policies, programs, and decision-making to ensure that both men and women benefit equally. It aims to make gender considerations a normal part of governance rather than an afterthought.

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1.0 Introduction

The University of Media, Arts and Communication (UniMAC) acknowledges the essence of cultivating an inclusive community for its members, particularly students and employees, as well as visitors, and all others associated with the university. As a higher educational institution committed to academic excellence, UniMAC intends to safeguard equal opportunity for everyone to attain their academic and professional goals irrespective of race, gender, religion, belief system, marital or civil partnership status, maternal status, disability, ethnicity, or age. This policy, therefore, asserts UniMAC's commitment to upholding the principles of equity, equality, inclusion, and diversity in view of international and national best practices.

2.0 Scope of the Gender, Disability and Social Inclusion Policy

This policy is applicable to everyone in the employ of the university, students, agents and agencies, and all internal or external parties engaged in a business transaction with or on behalf of the university. To dispel any confusion, this includes:

- a. All staff (academic, administrative, support, professional)
- b. Visiting scholars, researchers, and adjuncts
- c. Students (regular, part-time, weekend, occasional)
- d. Visitors or external parties dealing with or on behalf the university
- e. Institutions and colleges officially affiliated to UniMAC

3.0 General Provisions

- i. As an institution that operates in adherence with the provisions of Ghana's Labour Law, UniMAC is committed to eradicating discrimination, upholding the principle of equal opportunity and nurturing favourable working relationships among its members.
- ii. UniMAC is committed to ensuring that all students in good standing with the university (financial and disciplinary grounds) receive equal treatment and access to educational facilities without prejudice.
- iii. UNIMAC is devoted to recognising and tackling barriers to social inclusivity, by ensuring that employment, career progression and academic achievements are grounded on merit and equitable systems.
- iv. To ensure full compliance, UniMAC is committed to ensuring that every member of the university community has access to this document and understands the provisions therein.
- v. The university shall deem it expedient to mete out appropriate sanctions to any person or group of persons whose conduct contravenes the provisions of this policy.

4.0 PROVISIONS ON GENDER

UniMAC shall uphold and foster gender protection, inclusion, and parity across all divisions of the university. By this policy, UniMAC expresses its utmost commitment towards ensuring that no member of the university community, be it student or staff, is held back from attaining their full potentials based on issues of gender.

4.1 Students' Enrolment

The university shall make efforts to achieve and sustain gender balance in terms of students' admissions.

a. Admission Targets

- i. Allocate at least 50% of admission slots to underrepresented genders in faculties or programs where disparities exist.
- ii. Use lower cut-off points or scholarships, to increase the enrolment of minority genders in male- or female-dominated programs.
- iii. The University shall ensure gender equity in the award of scholarships.
- iv. Maintain gender-disaggregated statistics of all students, disaggregated further by faculties, departments, sections, and institutes, update these statistics annually and publish them.

b. Outreach and Sensitisation

- i. Develop targeted outreach campaigns to promote the enrolment of underrepresented genders in programs where they are traditionally absent (E.g., Film productions).
- ii. Partner with senior high schools and communities to encourage applications from diverse genders through workshops and mentorship.

c. Retention Support

- i. Provide gender-sensitive support services, including counselling and academic mentoring, to help students of all genders thrive academically.

4.2 Gender Balance in Recruitment

The university shall put measures in place to ensure equitable recruitment practices that promote gender diversity across all university departments and units.

a. Equitable Recruitment Processes

- i. Ensure gender-balanced interview panels for all recruitment processes.
- ii. Include gender diversity as a critical consideration in recruitment.

b. Career Development Support

- i. Offer mentoring and professional development programs tailored to support underrepresented genders in advancing their careers within the university.

- ii. Introduce childcare support or flexible working arrangements to support the retention of female staff, particularly those balancing family responsibilities.
- iii. The University will maintain a database of all academic and administrative staff members, specifying their qualifications, experiences, areas of expertise and interests, as well as services to the internal and external community.
- iv. The University will maintain gender-disaggregated staff data, which will be further disaggregated by faculties, departments, and directorates. This data will be updated annually and published.

4.3 Representation of Both Genders in Leadership of Boards and Committees

The university shall make conscious efforts to achieve 50-50 gender balance representation at all levels of leadership and decision-making within the university.

a. Leadership Development

4.1 Develop capacity-building programs for women and other underrepresented genders to prepare them for leadership roles, such as workshops, coaching, and mentorship initiatives.

4.2 Organise gender leadership training for leaders to promote inclusive management practices.

b. Equity in Appointments

- i. Ensure gender balance representation is considered during the nomination and appointment of Deans, Heads of Departments, and Directors and across key committees and boards.

c. Performance Monitoring

- i. Conduct annual reviews of leadership composition to identify and address gaps in gender representation.
- ii. Ensure gender-disaggregated data on leadership composition to inform policy.
- iii. Report progress on gender representation in the university's annual report.

d. Gender balance in committee composition and grant applications:

- i. All committees in the university should have a balanced representation of both genders
- ii. There should be efforts to balance genders when university staff are forming teams to apply for grants. This should give the institution an image of being gender sensitive.
- iii. Monitoring and evaluation of projects should identify the impact on women.

4.4 Representation of Both Genders in Student Leadership (Student Representative Council (SRC) And Graduate Students)

The university, particularly the Office of the Dean of Students, shall work together with student bodies, to ensure balance representation in the student's governance structure.

a. Elections

- b. Encourage gender diversity by mandating that each SRC or GRASAG executive team is comprised of members of all genders in key roles (E.g.; President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary).
- c. Provide training and support for female students and other underrepresented genders to prepare them for competitive elections.

b. Affirmative Action in Committees

- i. All committees under the SRC and GRASAG are required to have at least 40% representation of each gender.
- ii. Establish quotas or reserve seats for underrepresented genders in student legislative bodies.

c. Leadership Development

- i. Partner with faculty and external organisations to organise trainings on leadership and public speaking, particularly for students of underrepresented genders.
- ii. Create mentorship programs where current leaders mentor aspiring leaders of underrepresented genders.

4.5 Gender Equity in Curriculum Development

- (i) The university shall encourage the structuring of courses to cover gender issues: The content of courses for teaching and learning should be gender-responsive. There should be the inclusion of gender-focused topics, case studies, and perspectives in all relevant courses. Textbooks, lecture materials, and other resources should be developed to reflect gender diversity and equality. Highlight the intersections of gender with other factors such as class, ethnicity, disability, and technology.
- (ii) Plan for the implementation of a programme of studies in Gender in the next four years.

4.6 Mainstreaming

Creating a gender directorate under the University's registry to assess the implications of the University's planned actions and activities, budgeting, and implementation for both men and women.

a. Structure and Placement:

- i. The Gender Directorate will operate under the University's Registry.
- ii. The Directorate will be adequately staffed with gender experts and well-resourced personnel to carry out its mandate effectively.

b. Mandate and Responsibilities:

- i. Conduct gender analysis for all university-planned actions, including policies, programs, and infrastructure projects.
- ii. Review annual budgets and proposals to ensure they are gender-responsive and equitable.
- iii. Monitor the implementation of university projects to evaluate their gender impact.
- iv. Develop and disseminate guidelines and tools for integrating gender considerations into university processes.
- v. Institutionalise the observation and celebration of commemorative days, such as the International Women's Day, the day of the Girl Child/ Boy Child.

c. Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting

• Gender-Inclusive Budgeting:

- i. Require all departments and units to allocate specific budget lines for activities that promote gender equity, such as training, awareness campaigns, or infrastructure improvements.
- ii. Establish gender-budgeting guidelines for faculties and administrative units, supported by the Gender Directorate.

d. Development of Policy Documents from a Gender Perspective

(i) Promote the use of gender sensitive language in all policy documents, all published materials and information conveyed to students, staff and applicants for positions in the University.

(ii) The use of generic terms to describe both genders, such as " man" or " men" should be avoided. Gender-neutral terms such as " person", "people", "staff", and "personnel" should be encouraged.

(iii) Encourage the University community on the use of gender-sensitive language.

(iv) Encourage the review of already existing policy documents from a gender perspective.

e. Equity in Resource Allocation:

(i) Ensure that resources and opportunities are distributed equitably to address the specific needs of both men and women.

(ii) Prioritise funding for programs and initiatives that address gender gaps.

f. Impact Assessments:

- i. Incorporate gender impact assessments into the planning stages of university projects to evaluate potential effects on different genders.
- ii. Use findings from these assessments to adjust plans for inclusivity.

g. Capacity Building and Training

University Staff and Leadership Training:

- i. Provide mandatory gender mainstreaming workshops for university management, faculty, and administrative staff.
- ii. Train budget officers and planners in gender-responsive budgeting techniques.

Student Engagement:

- i. Organise seminars, discussions, and workshops to educate students on gender equity and equality and their role in supporting inclusive development.
- ii. Establish student ambassadors for gender equity to promote awareness and inclusivity at all levels.
- iii. Establish gender clubs in all the constituent institutes to promote peer gender education.

4.7 Gender and Communication

Use of gender-neutral language at all levels: The use of “man” or “men” to describe both men and women should be discouraged. Instead, there should be the use of gender-neutral words like “person”, “people”, “staff”, “personnel”, etc. Plural subjects should be used in case of unspecified gender to avoid the awkward use of the pronouns. Instead of using “each student should check his/ her results”, it should be “students should check their results”.

4.8 Safety

- a. Provide a safe and gender-friendly environment free from harassment, violence and exploitation: Prohibit all forms of gender-based violence and harassment, including inappropriate conduct during lectures, meetings, or university events. Ban exploitative practices, such as coercion for grades or professional advancement.
- b. Establish a Gender Desk or Safety Office in each constituent institute where victims can report incidents confidentially. Offer multiple reporting options, including in-person, email, hotline, and anonymous online submissions. Create a clear protocol for investigating complaints,

ensuring impartiality, confidentiality, and timely resolution. Assign trained personnel to handle sensitive cases professionally and impartially.

- c. Develop an anti-sexual harassment policy to manage issues of harassment and gender-based violence.
- d. Establish support systems to prevent and address gender cyber harassment, ensuring that all staff and students are aware of appropriate online behaviours.
- e. Provide resources for reporting incidents, implement strict disciplinary actions for perpetrators and offer counselling and support to victims to maintain a safe and respectful online environment.
- f. Provide immediate access to counselling, medical care, and legal assistance for victims of gender-based concerns. Offer protection to whistleblowers and ensure there is no retaliation against those who report incidents.
- g. Celebrate designated days like the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women to reinforce awareness. Incorporate specific clauses about harassment, violence, and exploitation into the university's code of conduct.

4.9 Gender-Related Health and Wellness

Addressing the specific health and wellness needs of all genders: The university shall organise periodic assessments to identify the unique health and wellness needs of different genders within the university community. Develop and implement gender-sensitive health education programs. Focus on topics such as sexual and reproductive health, mental health, substance abuse, and gender-specific health risks. Ensure that health communication materials are inclusive and address the needs of all genders. Offer health services and wellness that address specific gender needs.

4.10 Scholarships and Fellowships

The university shall encourage equal participation by all genders: Set clear goals to achieve gender balance in distributing scholarships and fellowships. Ensure criteria for selection are equitable, fair, inclusive, and free from bias or barriers that may disadvantage any gender. Introduce scholarships and fellowships specifically targeted at underrepresented genders in certain fields. Create quotas or reserved slots to promote gender equity in competitive funding opportunities.

4.11 Sports and Extracurricular Activities

To ensure fairness and equity in sports and extracurricular activities, the university shall:

- a. Promote equal access to clubs, sports, and extracurricular activities for all genders: Conduct outreach and recruitment campaigns to encourage participation of all genders in sports, clubs, and extracurricular activities. Offer a range of activities that cater to varied interests and abilities, ensuring representation of both traditionally male-dominated and female-dominated activities. Establish gender-inclusive sports teams or mixed-gender clubs alongside traditional gender-segregated options where appropriate.
- b. Provide equal opportunities and funding to all genders: Ensure equitable funding, facilities, and resources for activities dominated by different genders. Maintain parity in the allocation of equipment, uniforms, coaching staff, and venue quality across gender-based teams or clubs. Introduce sports scholarships and grants with equal distribution across genders. Recognise achievements in extracurricular activities for all genders through awards, sponsorships, or incentives. Schedule games, practices, and competitions at equitably conducive times to avoid favouritism based on gender.
- c. Provide opportunities for leadership to all genders: Mandate gender balanced representation in leadership roles within clubs, sports teams, and extracurricular committees.

4.12 Gender-Based Offenses

Discriminating against any member of the university community or treating someone unfairly because of their gender, sex, class, ethnicity etc is prohibited.

Per this policy, it shall be an offense to:

- i. Introduce rules/regulations that overtly or subtly consciously or unconsciously have or are likely to have a negative impact on a person or a group of persons of one gender.
- ii. Dismiss, terminate an employee's contract, apply sanctions, deny of privileges, opportunities or grades or threat of same grounds of one's gender or 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 on the application of this policy.
- iii. Discriminate against a member of the university on the basis of pregnancy, or pregnancy-related conditions.

- iv. Deny an employee entitled to leave for care work (children/elderly care) on the grounds of the person's gender (e.g., denying a male entitled to leave for care work).
- v. Deny anyone promotion, grade or award on the grounds of one's gender.
- vi. Refuse, delay without just cause or frustrate attempts to address a complaint or report of gender discrimination.
- vii. Make sexist remarks to one or more persons in public or private as a member of the university community.
- viii. Subject a person to an act of gender-based violence whether physical (such as assault, deprivation of liberty among others), psychological, emotional, economic or sexual in nature, including coercive or transactional sex, rape or assault.
- ix. Subject a member of the university including a subordinate or student to an unfair treatment on the basis of the person's gender.

5.0 PROVISIONS ON DISABILITY

The University recognises persons with disabilities as individuals who face long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments, which may create barriers to their full participation in society on an equal footing with others. These conditions can hinder effective engagement in various aspects of life, and the University identifies several conditions as disabilities, including but not limited to arthritis, attention deficit disorder, blindness or low vision, cerebral palsy, and communication disorders such as deafness or hearing impairments. Other recognised conditions include dyslexia, emotional or psychological disorders, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, specific learning disabilities, spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, and certain medical disorders. Additionally, temporary disabilities and various other health impairments are considered. This list is subject to revision over time to encompass a broader range of conditions as needed.

This policy applies to all staff and students at the University of Media, Arts and Communication who have disabilities, as defined by the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715). The Act provides the basis for identifying and understanding disabilities and ensures alignment with national standards. The University is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment where staff and students with disabilities receive consistent and equitable support across all Faculties, Departments, and Units. This policy aims to address barriers, promote accessibility, and ensure that everyone can fully participate in academic and professional life within the University without discrimination.

5.1 Policy Objectives

The university shall make determined efforts to:

a. Provide Equal Access to Education, Employment, and Campus Life

- i. Ensure that all academic programs, extracurricular activities, and support services are accessible to persons with disabilities.
- ii. Offer reasonable support such as assistive technologies, alternative learning materials, and flexible assessment methods to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities.
- iii. Create an inclusive workplace for staff with disabilities by providing necessary adjustments and support to enable them to perform their roles effectively.
- iv. Create an inclusive and conducive campus climate for students with disabilities to ensure mainstream recognition and acceptance.

b. Ensure Compliance with Legal Standards

- i. Align all university policies and practices with the requirements of the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715), and international conventions such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- ii. Establish mechanisms to monitor and report on the implementation of the policy to ensure adherence to these standards.
- iii. Protect the rights of individuals with disabilities by implementing robust grievance procedures to address complaints of discrimination or non-compliance.

c. Promote Awareness and Inclusivity within the University Community

- i. Conduct regular sensitization programs to educate students, staff, and faculty about disability rights, accessibility, and inclusion.
- ii. Encourage a culture of respect and understanding by addressing stereotypes and stigma associated with disabilities.
- iii. Facilitate training sessions for university personnel on disability etiquette and strategies for fostering inclusive learning and working environments.
- iv. Engage the wider university community in initiatives and events that celebrate diversity and promote the active participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of campus life.

5.2 Admissions Policy for Persons with Disabilities

- i. The university shall exclusively welcome applications from individuals with disabilities who meet the standard entry requirements for all its academic programs.

- ii. To ensure appropriate support, applicants are encouraged to disclose their disability status on the application form.
- iii. Following admission, the Office designated for Disability Services will be notified and will take immediate steps to provide the necessary resources and assistance to ensure a successful academic experience.

5.3 Access and Inclusion Strategies

Access and inclusion are central to ensuring that students, faculty, staff, and visitors with disabilities can fully participate in all aspects of university life. The University of Media, Arts, and Communication (UniMAC) will implement various strategies to make the university environment more inclusive, ensuring that all members of the community, regardless of their abilities, have the support they need to succeed. Below are detailed practical actions that UniMAC shall take in each major thematic area: **Physical Accessibility, Digital Accessibility, Curriculum Accessibility, Support Services.**

To achieve the policy objective, the University shall ensure provision and implementation of the following areas:

a. Physical Accessibility

- i. Ramps and Elevators: Ensure that all buildings are equipped with disability-friendly ramps and elevators that comply with accessibility standards to provide easy access for individuals with mobility impairments. In areas where elevators may not be available, consider installing stairlifts for individuals with disabilities. In the absence of that, efforts should be made to ensure that student support offices such as Academic Affairs, Counselling Services are located at the basements or ground floors of any high building to ease accessibility.
- ii. Seating Arrangements: Ensure that lecture halls, auditoriums, and event spaces have designated accessible seating that allows for students using wheelchairs or other mobility aids to sit comfortably.

b. Classroom Accessibility:

- i. Assistive Technology: Ensure that all multimedia content is accessible, with captions for videos and accessible presentation formats.

c. Digital Accessibility

- i. Ensure that UniMAC's website and online platforms are compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1). This includes

- having alternative text for images, text descriptions for videos, keyboard navigability, and color contrast for readability.
- ii. Ensure that the usage of platforms like the Learning Management System (LMS) are disability friendly allowing students with disabilities to easily access assignments, discussions, and resources. This includes providing alternative formats for reading materials and clear navigational structures.

d. Support Services

- i. Establish a dedicated office, such as a Disability Resource Office or a Disability Support Unit under the Human Resource Management Unit of the University, which provides resources and assistance to students, faculty, and staff with disabilities.
- ii. Ensure that counselling services are available to students with disabilities, especially those with mental health conditions. These services should be equipped with trained professionals who understand the specific challenges faced by individuals with disabilities and can offer personalized support.
- iii. Organise training programs for directorates, faculty, staff and students on disability awareness, the importance of inclusivity, and how to support individuals with disabilities.

5.4 Disclosure of Disability, Record Keeping and Data Management

- a. Members of the University community who require specific support services or facilities shall disclose their disabilities to the University. This disclosure is essential for the University to provide tailored assistance that facilitates equal access to academic and institutional resources.
- b. Disability disclosures shall be made to the designated University official, who is responsible for coordinating appropriate support. Also, individuals are encouraged to disclose their disability status on application forms and any other required forms. This ensures that individuals receive the necessary services to address their unique needs.
- c. All disclosed disability-related information shall be treated as private and confidential. UniMAC shall ensure that this information is securely managed and used solely for the purpose of providing necessary assistance, in line with institutional policies and data protection laws.
- d. Staff and students shall be encouraged to disclose disabilities that have a significant and lasting impact on their ability to perform day-to-day activities. Open disclosure

helps the University identify and address barriers, promoting a supportive and equitable environment.

e. If individuals fail to disclose their disabilities which cannot be openly seen to the University, the University shall not be held liable for not providing support.

5.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure that rights of people with special needs are safeguarded, the University will:

- Regularly solicit input from students, staff, and faculty with disabilities regarding their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improvement.
- Engage disability advocacy groups and external stakeholders for insights into best practices and emerging needs.
- Use surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one consultations to ensure diverse perspectives are heard.
- Establish a system for periodic review and evaluation of the policy's effectiveness. This should include feedback from persons with disabilities, adjustments based on emerging needs, and the assurance that all policy aspects are being effectively enforced.

5.6 Recommendations

The following are recommended to enable UniMAC to be better positioned to develop and implement an effective disability policy that will promote an inclusive and equitable environment for all members of the University community:

- i. Adopt a braille section in the library where resources in Braille and other accessible formats will be provided within the university library.
- ii. Provide guidelines for adjusting examination conditions to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.
- iii. Ensure that counselling and mental health services are available and accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- iv. Ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to employment, internships and national service opportunities.
- v. Ensure that there are non-discriminatory practices in the recruitment of staff.
- vi. Adopt universal design principles by encouraging all academic programs and university services to incorporate universal design principles that benefit all students, including those with disabilities.
- vii. Partner with disability advocacy organisations and collaborate with local and international disability advocacy groups to gain insights on best practices, receive external support and strengthen the university's approach to disability inclusion.

- viii. The University should ensure that all communications, including updates and available resources, are accessible to all stakeholders, including those with sensory or cognitive disabilities. For instance, formats like braille, large print, and digital communication tools that are compatible with screen readers should be used.
- ix. Launch campaigns to raise continuous awareness and advocacy on disability inclusion within the university community.
- x. Incorporate into the university's strategic planning, disability policies that ensure inclusion for all. This will, in the long run, form an integral part of UniMAC's vision and mission.

6.0 PROVISIONS ON SOCIAL INCLUSION

This policy defines social inclusion as conscious and calculated efforts to ensure that everyone, particularly individuals and groups who are marginalised or disadvantaged are given equal and equitable access to resources and opportunities necessary for full participation in economic, cultural, political and social life.

6.1 Principles and provisions of social inclusion in this policy

The university must:

- a. Foster an enabling environment where all students, staff, stakeholders feel valued, respected, and supported to attain their potentials, irrespective of social and cultural peculiarities
- b. Be unprejudicial or non-discriminatory, particularly on grounds of protected qualities such as age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion, belief, gender, race and disability
- c. Ensure inclusion of under-represented groups in the decision-making processes across the university: Composition of governance structures, committees, and student councils (SRC, GRASAG, NUGS etc) should adequately reflect the diverse demographics and marginalised groups in the university.
- d. Provide equitable access to educational resources: All students, regardless of socioeconomic, cultural and other distinguishing factors shall have equitable access to quality educational resources such as learning materials, academic facilities and contact hours. The university can also institute special interventions such as scholarships and bursaries, for disadvantaged students or groups.

- e. Encourage the development of inclusive curriculum and classroom environments: Academic programmes and teaching methods should reflect the peculiar needs and experiences of the diverse groups of learners to ensure inclusivity in the classroom. Additionally, teaching and learning materials must be designed to be sensitive to the orientations of the diverse groups of learners. They must also be devoid of any stereotypical representations. This invariably guarantees holistic appreciation of academic lessons.

- f. Implement neutral/fair recruitment and employment practices: Non-discriminatory and equitable recruitment and promotion practices will be established to ensure that diverse demographic groups are fairly represented at levels of employment in the university. Where deemed necessary, there will be measures to accommodate diverse needs of employees such as caregivers, individuals with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

- g. Establish support outfits for marginalised and under-represented groups: There shall be support services devoted to providing counselling and mentorship assistance to students and staff of disadvantaged circumstances. Avenues should also be created for amplifying marginalised voices within the university community.

- h. Offer training and awareness programmes on inclusivity and diversity: Events should be organised to sensitise students, faculty and staff on issues of social inclusion, respect for diversity, cultural competence and unconscious biases. Essentially, orientation sessions for new members of the university community will incorporate exhaustive segments on social inclusion and respect for diversity.

6.2 Individual Responsibilities

All students, employees and stakeholders are urged to:

- a. refrain from any discriminatory act or the use of any language that violates this Policy
- b. not give orders or induce or attempt to induce others to act in contravention to this policy
- c. foster a sense of collectivism, promote inclusion and protect the wellbeing of others
- d. avail themselves for sensitisation and awareness programmes on social inclusion and respect for diversity
- e. identify opportunities for promoting inclusiveness in their work and academic spaces

- f. inform the HR Office/Office of the Dean of Students should they become privy to any prejudicial treatment, either against themselves or any third party that is not in conformity to this Policy.

6.3 Procedure for lodging complaints

- a. Any member of the university community who feels a particular action, behaviour or assertion is discriminatory against them has the right to lodge a formal complaint.
- b. Where necessary, endeavour to resolve the issue informally by i. communicating personally with the involved party for the purposes of seeking clarification and possible resolution, or ii. Rely on a mediator to amicably resolve the issue
- c. If the aforementioned informal approaches fail, engage the formal reporting processes.
- d. Documenting the nature of the issue in a clear manner, with particular attention to the date, name(s) of the party(ies) involved, evidences, and witnesses present (if any)
- e. Submit the written complaint to the HR Office or the Office of the Dean of Students depending on nature of the issue or parties involved
- f. The office to handle the complaint shall acknowledge receipt the complaint not later than 5 working days.
- g. An assigned committee or investigator shall launch a thorough inquiry into the complaints by interviewing parties involved, assessing the evidence provided, speaking with witnesses (if any) and gathering additional information where necessary. Meanwhile, confidentiality must be upheld throughout the processes at some sensitive stages of the investigation process.
- h. The committee shall submit its findings to the University Management for onward action in accordance with the provisions in the statutes. Possible outcomes will include
 - i. arbitration and conflict resolution
 - ii. Disciplinary actions and
 - iii. Recommendation for systemic changes

7.0 Review of Policy

- i. There shall be a comprehensive review of the policy at predetermined intervals in response to significant legislative changes. Preferably, every five years.
- ii. Ensure that revisions reflect evolving national and international standards, technological advancements, and community needs.
- iii. The policy shall be made available to everyone in the University.



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