

Bath Spa Students' Union Equalities Policy

1. Introduction

Equality and diversity are at the heart of Bath Spa Students' Union. The Union is committed to ensuring that all students can take full advantage of activities and opportunities and enjoy a positive experience at Bath Spa University.

At Bath Spa Students' Union, we recognise putting equalities at the heart of our business isn't just the right thing to do, it is fundamental part of our mission to be relevant and fair to ALL our members.

The Union has a zero tolerance of all forms of harassment and bullying. Our policies seek to ensure that members feel confident in challenging discrimination or harassment of any kind where it occurs.

We recognise the value of the Union's diverse membership and seek to create a safe and welcoming environment for all staff, students and visitors.

The purpose of this Policy is to be clear about our commitment to equality and diversity and to establish a framework for achieving our equality duties.

2. Background

2a. Current legislation

The Equality Act 2010 (the 'Act') consolidates previous anti-discrimination legislation and introduces new measures that have direct implications for higher education institutions. The aim of the Act is to harmonise discrimination law whilst also strengthening the law to support progress on equality.

The Act prohibits discrimination, harassment and victimisation by people who supply services. Customers are protected both when requesting a service and during the course of being provided with a service.

The grounds on which discrimination is unlawful are called 'protected characteristics' and are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender status
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation

2b. Definitions

The Act, and this policy, use certain defined terms. Their meanings are as follows:

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when a person treats one person less favourably than they would another because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

When a provision, criterion or practice is neutral on the face of it, but its impact particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic, unless the person applying the provision can justify it as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment

The Act outlines three types of harassment:

- unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the complainant, or violating the complainant's dignity (this applies to all the protected characteristics apart from pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership)
- unwanted conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment)
- treating a person less favourably than another person because they have either submitted to, or did not submit to, sexual harassment or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment

The perceptions of the recipient of the harassment are very important and harassment can have been deemed to have occurred even if the intention was not present, but the recipient felt they were being harassed.

Victimisation

Where one person treats another less favourably because he or she has asserted their legal rights in line with the Act or helped someone else to do so.

3. Equality and Diversity at Bath Spa Students' Union

3a. Provision of services, including goods and facilities

Bath Spa Students' Union provides a wide range of activities for students, including recreational activities and events, volunteering opportunities, clubs and societies, academic representation, advice and support, fitness facilities, a shop, bar and café.

We will work to ensure that students, staff and visitors who use our services are able to do so free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

3b. Our equality duties:

- to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share a protected characteristic
- to ensure that equality is at the heart of the organisation

- to take steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it
- to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding

3c. Responsibilities

Trustees

All Trustees have a responsibility to ensure that the values and beliefs of the organisation are upheld in all of the organisation's activity and that the organisation itself complies with the policy, namely to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of different groups and protected characteristics.

Democracy & Scrutiny Committee

Our Democracy & Scrutiny Committee is responsible for approving this policy jointly with the Board of Trustees and any subsequent amendments.

Sabbatical Officers

The Sabbatical Officers have a responsibility for ensuring that Bath Spa Students' Union has in place an effective policy framework for implementing effective campaigns which promote equality and value diversity.

All Sabbatical and Student Officers and elected Representatives

All Sabbatical and Student Officers and elected Representatives have a responsibility to ensure that their actions and campaigns uphold this policy, namely to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of different groups and protected characteristics.

Our team of Equality Representatives are students elected to represent the interests of under-represented groups who run campaigns appropriate to their network and represent those groups across the Union.

The Equality Representatives are responsible for ensuring the Union continually challenges itself to ensure Equalities and Diversity are at the heart of everything the union does. They work with staff and the National Centre for Diversity and partners to develop and implement our action plan which supports this policy.

CEO

The Union's CEO has responsibility for ensuring the effective development and implementation of Equality and Diversity within the Union and for ensuring that all managers are trained effectively and implement the policy.

All Managers

All Managers are responsible for ensuring that the policy and our action plan are implemented and maintained in their own areas/services and activities. They ensure that all staff in their teams are fully informed about their responsibilities and receive support and training to carry them out and taking appropriate action against staff and students that contravene the policy.

All Staff

All Staff in the course of their employment have a responsibility to ensure that their actions comply with the policy, namely to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity

and promote good relations between people of different groups and protected characteristics.

All clubs and society committees

All club and society committees must do their utmost to ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy is upheld in all activity, and must ensure appropriate action against students that contravene the policy.

Students

Students have a responsibility in ensuring that discrimination or harassment of any kind is challenged where it occurs. Students are an integral part of ensuring that Bath Spa University is a safe and welcoming environment for all.

4. Implementing our commitment to Equalities

Investors in Diversity

Our Investors in Diversity Action Plan details how we will take forward key concerns and issues raised by our members, staff and partners.

Policies

- The following policies detail our commitment and how we will deal with issues that arise:
- Dignity at Work policy details our commitment to eliminate harassment.
- Complaints Policy details how we will deal with any complaints that arise.
- Staff disciplinary and grievance procedures detail how we will deal with staffing matters.
- Removal of Trustees, Officers & Representatives procedure details how we deal with complaints regarding trustees, officers and representatives.
- Members Code of Conduct details the standards expected of all members and how we will deal with complaints.

Date of Approval: Student Council & Board of Trustees, January 2016. Updated 2018.