

Policies and Procedures

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy¹

Policy Number: 1.6.2.47
Responsible Officer: The Vice-Chancellor & President
Policy Editor/Contact: Director Human Resources
Approving Authority: The Senate
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1 OVERVIEW

- 1.1. The University of the South Pacific (USP) is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion which are captured in the non-discriminatory provisions in the Charter and Statutes. In the decade of the 1960's, diversity was used to describe students from historically underrepresented ethnic groups, most of whom were the first in their families to attend university.
- 1.2. Under the Charter established in 1968 the university's primary purpose was to provide education opportunities to all students from diverse background which includes underrepresented groups in the Region.
- 1.3. Therefore, at USP, diversity represents the nation where a person is from, the culture, history and traditions that they bring from their nations as well as gender, disability and vulnerable groups. It is within this understanding of diversity that USP maintains policies and databases that document the opportunities for citizens of each of the twelve island nations that are served by the university to work in and study at the university.

2 PURPOSE

This Policy articulates the University's commitment and legal obligation to providing a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning and work environment that is free from discrimination and sexual harassment.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies throughout the University to enable the University to achieve its mission and strategic objectives, consistent with its values and commitment.

¹ This Policy does not apply to retirement from the University on the grounds of health or age. This Policy is subject to sections 10 and 17 of the Staff Ordinance and the University's retirement policies (as introduced, amended or replaced from time to time).

4 POLICY

- 4.1 The University is committed to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion by providing an environment that values and understands diversity in society.
- 4.2 The University is committed to providing equitable and inclusive access to learning and employment opportunities as well as resources and facilities.
- 4.3 The University will identify and remove unfair and illegal barriers and promote and provide equitable access, participation, engagement and success for all staff and students. Should equity be disregarded in any instance the University will not hesitate to take immediate and appropriate action.
- 4.4 The University aims to provide an inclusive safe and appropriate study, work and living environment characterised by impartial and merit based decision making.
- 4.5 The University will enhance its national and international reputation by attracting, retaining and supporting talented people to achieve their potential for quality outcomes. This will benefit the creative and intellectual life of the University, and support engagement with the University's diverse communities.
- 4.6 The University opposes discrimination, including discrimination on the prohibited grounds stated in the Bill of Rights (enshrined in the constitution) of the regional countries of the University, being gender, marital status, religious belief, ethical belief, colour, race, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, political opinion, employment status, family status, and sexual orientation and socio economic background.

5 BREACH OF POLICY

In the event that a staff member or student has breached this policy, resolution processes can be conducted through the:

[Student Grievance Policy](#)
[Discipline of Staff Ordinance](#)
[Regulations Governing Student Conduct](#)
[Staff Conduct Committee](#)

6 DEFINITIONS

Disabilities includes those who are blind or Deaf; have hearing or vision impairments; impairment due to head injury, medical conditions or mental health conditions; physical or mobility impairments; speech impairments and specific learning disabilities.

Discrimination means denial of participation or human rights to categories of people based on prejudice. It includes detrimental treatment of an individual or group based on their actual or perceived membership of a certain group or social category. Discrimination may be conscious or unconscious, direct or indirect.

Equity at the University of the South of the Pacific means fairness and justice within a safe and inclusive study and work environment that enables talented people to achieve their potential and the University to achieve its strategic objectives.

Inclusive means including everyone and not excluding any part of society.

University means The University of the South Pacific and includes all subsidiaries.

Gender: refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men.²

Sexual Harassment: uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical behaviour of a sexual nature especially by a person in authority toward a subordinate (such as an employee or student).³

7 REFERENCES

- [Disability Inclusiveness Policy](#)

This policy has borrowed information from the following Universities which are acknowledged:

- University of the West Indies - <https://sta.uwi.edu/igds/TheUWIGenderPolicy.asp>
- Griffith University - <http://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/Equal%20Opportunity%20Policy.pdf>
- Deakin University - <https://policy.deakin.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=39>
- Massey University - <http://policyguide.massey.ac.nz/massey/fms//PolicyGuide/Documents/Academic/Equity%20of%20Access%20to%20Educational%20Opportunities%20Policy.pdf>
- University of Western Australia - <http://www.hr.uwa.edu.au/policies/policies/equity/equal-opportunity>
- University of Melbourne - <http://students.unimelb.edu.au/balance/diversity>
- Otago University - <http://www.otago.ac.nz/humanresources/working-at-otago/equity/otago060690.html>

² <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>

³ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sexual%20harassment>