



Open University of Mauritius

Equal Opportunity Policy

As Per Section 9 of The Equal Opportunity Act 2012
(Amended 2017) & Section 5 of The Workers' Rights Act

Introduction

The Open University of Mauritius (hereafter referred to as either OU or University) is part of a diverse multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society, with people of different social backgrounds, ethnicities, faiths, and generations. OU recognises that, within its national and international operating environments, there are people from a rich diversity of cultural backgrounds, with a range of differing abilities and previous educational experiences, all of whom can benefit from and contribute to the life of the University. The values of diversity, mutual respect, tolerance and equality of opportunity are fundamental to OU's ethos. In its Rules and Regulations, OU has already stated its commitment to avoid discrimination among its students and it is now going even further by elaborating a policy to apply the same principle in all its processes and procedures.

In line mainly with Section 9 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2012 (Amended 2017) and Section 5 of The Workers' Rights Act 2019 (Amended 2022), the University, through this written equal opportunity policy, is committed, in its pursuit of academic excellence, to equality of opportunity and to a proactive and inclusive approach to equality, which promotes an inclusive culture; and values diversity among its employees, student population and stakeholders. OU will promote respect and encourage good relations with and between the students and employees as well as its external stakeholders. The University will endeavour to meet the needs of all the stakeholders while promoting shared values in an inclusive and harmonious place of work and study, where there is mutual respect and where harassment and bullying, intimidation or violence are not tolerated.

Policy Statement

OU is committed to a policy and practice which require that, for students, admission to the University and progression within courses offered at all levels will be determined only by personal merit and by performance. For staff, entry into employment with the University; progression, selection, and promotion within employment; and professional development opportunities

will be determined only by personal merit and by the application of criteria approved by the Board of the University, the applicable Schemes of Service, and the laws, rules and regulations set by the Government of Mauritius, which are related to the duties and conditions of each particular post and the needs of the University.

Subject to statutory provisions, including those set in the OU Act, and the laws, rules and regulations set by the authorities, no student, member of staff, applicant for admission as a student, or applicant for appointment as a member of staff will be treated less favourably than another by the University on the basis of age, caste, colour, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, political opinion, place of origin, social origin, race, pregnancy, HIV status, family responsibility, sex or sexual orientation.

Application of the Policy

The University will ensure that new recruitment and selection for promotion continue to be made on the basis of the applicant's eligibility for the job and their ability to fulfil the job requirements and criteria laid down in the scheme of service. Thus, during recruitment and promotion exercises, importance will be given to the applicant's skills, abilities, qualifications, experience and merit in relation to the post applied for.

Vacancies and student recruitment will be advertised widely.

Handling of Complaints

The University will work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation based on age, caste, colour, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, political opinion, place of origin, social origin, race, pregnancy, HIV status, family responsibility, sex or sexual orientation. If any person admitted as a student or appointed as a member of staff considers that he or she is suffering from unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation in her or his admission, appointment, or progression through the University based on his or her age, caste, colour, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, political opinion, place of origin, social origin, race, pregnancy, HIV status, family responsibility, sex or sexual orientation, he or she may make a complaint to the Director-General, which will be dealt with through the agreed procedures for complaints or grievances or the procedures for dealing with bullying and harassment, as appropriate.

Updating the Policy

Requirements, conditions, provisions, criteria and practices will be reviewed regularly in the light of monitoring exercises, and revised, if they are found to, or might, discriminate.

The policy will be updated as and when the need arises and in the light of emerging challenges.

Any amendment to the policy shall be submitted to the Board for approval.

The Board of the Open University of Mauritius reserves the right to make the appropriate amendments to this Equal Opportunity Policy after consultation with the stakeholders.

Implementation and Dissemination of the Policy

The Director-General and the Registrar will ensure the implementation of this policy across all Divisions. This policy will be disseminated among all staff members and students by email. All staff and students shall be responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy and will be required to abide by same.

Heads of Sections shall be required to also ensure that their respective staff have taken cognisance of the policy.

This policy shall be posted on the OU website and linked to the OU e-Learn platform.

Approved by the Board of the Open University of Mauritius on 23^d November 2022 for implementation as from 1st December 2022.