

# **Policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

## **Western Caspian University**

### **1. Introduction**

Western Caspian University takes social responsibility to ensure impartiality, fairness within process and procedures and maintain tolerance to diversity for people of all identities. This document specifies the rights and perspectives the university holds for the support of equality, diversity and inclusion.

### **2. Aims**

2.1. The document aims to strengthen and promote equality, justice and inclusive culture in all bodies of university

2.2 This policy aims to outline the rules and procedures to maintain equality, diversity and inclusiveness within the University

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all members of the university community both on and off campus areas.

Protected characteristics under this policy are as follows:

Age

Gender

Disability

Race

Religion

Sexual Orientation

Socio-economic background

Marriage and civil partnerships

Pregnancy and maternity

## **4. Definitions**

Equality- the right of different groups of people to have a similar social position and receive the same treatment

Diversity – the fact of many different types of things or people being included in something; a range of different things or people

Inclusion – the idea that everyone should be able to use the same facilities, take part in the same activities and enjoy the same experiences, including people who have a disability or other disadvantage

Victimization – the act of victimizing someone (treating them unfairly)

Disability- a physical, mental, cognitive, or developmental condition that impairs, interferes with, or limits a person's ability to engage in certain tasks or actions or participate in typical daily activities and interactions.

Equal opportunities - equal conditions and guarantees created for women and men in the exercise of human rights

Discrimination - treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way than the way in which you treat other people, because of their race, gender, sexuality etc.

Direct discrimination - is the legal term that applies if you treat someone less favorably than someone else has been treated (or would be treated) because of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Indirect discrimination is the legal term that describes situations when policies, practices or procedures are put in place that appear to treat everyone equally but, in practice, are less fair to those with a certain protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Bullying- the behavior of a person who hurts or frightens someone smaller or less powerful, often forcing that person to do something they do not want to do

## **5. Policy statement**

- a. This policy guarantees that no people (working/studying/ functioning/ serving) within the boundaries of Western Caspian University is subject to less supportive treatment owing to age, race, disability, gender, religion, marriage and civil partnerships, sexual orientation, pregnancy and socio-economic background.
- b. The university prioritizes community diversity by maintaining spaces where diverse perspectives are valued, listened to and respected with a collective effort in student, faculty, senior administrative and management level.
- c. The university strives to adapt institutional facilities and adjustments to the needs of people with disabilities in the context of working and learning practices.
- d. The university seeks to treat the employees the same while hiring, dismissing, promoting improving professional training as well as evaluating the quality of work irrespective of aforesaid characteristics.
- e. All people (working/studying/ functioning/ serving) at the university hold the right to be protected from discrimination, victimization, bullying by seeking help from university representatives. Conflicts arising from the aforementioned reasons should be resolved in line with this policy.

## **6. Legal Framework**

Law on Education (2009)

The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Gender Equality (2006)

Labor Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1999)

## **7. Western Caspian University's commitment**

### **7.1 Students**

7.1.1 The University is committed to implementing fair and transparent admission procedures regardless of the financial and socio-cultural background of applicants/candidates.

7.1.2 The University offers quality education in accordance with state education standards in a morally and psychologically healthy, tolerant and supportive environment

7.1.3 The University develops a system which protects cases of physical and psychological violence that humiliate honor and dignity, as well as acts that violate human rights of students.

7.1.4 The University regularly raises awareness and gives guidance on what steps should be taken in case of direct, indirect discrimination, harassment, and bullying with the help of trained professionals.

## **7.2. Curriculum and Assessment**

7.2.1 Western Caspian University monitors curriculum and assessment strategies employed by departments to be sure if there is any aspect ruining practicality and easy access

7.2.2 The curriculum and syllables are expected to be responsive to the needs and characteristics of students from diverse backgrounds as far as students have sufficiency in program requirements.

7.2.3 Assessment of students must be conducted in a fair, transparent and safe manner abiding by institutional rules and procedures.

## **7.3 Recruitment and employment**

7.3.1 In line with The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Gender Equality advertising posts for recruitment should not give preference to representatives of

any gender, or to request information about the job seeker's family status or personal life.

7.3.2 The university ensures the same working conditions for employees engaged in the same work, regardless of gender, ethnic, socioeconomic, financial background and avoids taking different disciplinary measures for the same violation of the rules.

7.3.3 All people working and functioning at Western Caspian University should be provided with an up-to-date job description specifying responsibilities and performance expected to be achieved.

7.3.4 All employees hold the right to file and report acts of harassment, discrimination and seek help from associated members on a confidential basis.

7.3.5 Committee of EDI, faculty members and administrative staff should be trained to be aware and informed on the basis of equality, diversity, inclusion and examples of misconduct as a part of capacity building.

## **8. Responsibilities**

### **8.1 EDI Committee**

8.1.1 The committee is expected to review the university's commitment to implement this policy

8.1.2 Analyse and recommend on data illustrating student complaints and incidents

8.1.3 Develop strategic and action plans to deal with student experience

8.1.4 Conduct regular discussion, seminars and trainings (namely, "Diversity and Inclusion in Education" and "Organizational Leadership in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion" online trainings) with student and faculty members to keep them informed on rights, responsibilities and strategies to deal with

### **8.2 EDI Officers**

8.2.1 Both students and faculty are encouraged to contribute implementation of this policy on volunteer basis

8.2.2 Strive to promote values in a collective manner

8.2.3 Implement and report the action plan made for each every academic year

8.2.4 Respond to complaints and deal community problems in a relevant and professional manner

**8.3 Students/Faculty/ Administrative staff:**

are expected to act in line with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy attend at trainings and acquire knowledge on how to combat sensitive issues related to direct and indirect discrimination

inform incidents, cases of discrimination, harassment they have witnessed or experienced within the boundaries of Western Caspian University

**9. Monitoring and review**

8.1 Quality Assurance Center at Western Caspian University is in charge of monitoring and reviewing this policy.

8.2 The Center conducts regular surveys to collect data on students' well-being, complaints, concerns and suggestions as regards curriculum, assessment, administrative support and campus facilities.

8.3 Report EDI committee and senior management