Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi

Equality and Diversity POLICY

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KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI-GHANA
**QUALITY ASSURANCE AND
PLANNING UNIT**

Forward

The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi has a mission to advance knowledge in science and technology through creating an environment for undertaking relevant research, quality teaching, entrepreneurship training and community engagement to improve quality of life. In order to achieve this mission, there is the need to have a Equality and Diversity Policy.

This policy seeks, among others, to ensure that all members of the University Community are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

The University is grateful to all those who ensured the initiation, development and approval this Policy.

Professor K. Obiri-Danso
VICE-CHANCELLOR

Acknowledgement

As part of the strategic planning mandate of the Quality Assurance and Planning Unit (QAPU), university policies are initiated and proposed for approval by the Academic Board. The Unit initiated the Equity and Diversity Policy which was approved by the Academic Board.

The QAPU is grateful Prof. Kwasi Opoku Amankwa's committee for the draft of this Policy and also the members of various committees that reviewed it. We are equally indebted to the staff of QAPU who facilitated the entire process.

Lastly, we wish to appreciate the contribution of all staff of this University who contributed inseveral ways in developing and approving this Policy.

PROF. CHRISTIAN AGYARE
HEAD, QAPU
AUGUST, 2018

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1. Introduction and Statement of Intent

1.1 The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) is committed to promoting and implementing a Policy of Equality of opportunity in the learning, teaching, research and working environments.

1.2 The University aims to create a learning and working environment based on fostering good relations between all people, with a shared commitment to promoting respect for all, and challenging and preventing stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and harassment.

1.3 The University is committed to inclusiveness to the benefit of the University community in respect of its learning, teaching, research, management, administration and support service activities.

1.4 The University upholds the principle that, in their areas of expertise, relevant staff of the University shall have freedom within the law to hold and express opinion, to question and test established ideas and receive wisdom, and to present controversial or unpopular points of view without placing in jeopardy their employment or any entitlements or privileges they enjoy.

2. Scope of the Policy

2.1   This Policy applies to all members of the University community, including:

- All members of staff holding a contract of employment, and staff from other institutions on placement at, or visiting the University;

- Individuals with honorary or affiliate status;

- All students, including visiting and placement students;

- Visitors, including external persons or agencies using the University's premises, facilities or services;

- Contractors working at the University; and

- Individuals working or acting on the University's behalf, including suppliers of goods and services.

3. The Policy

3.1   The University aims to ensure that all members of its community are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

3.2   The University will apply this policy in compliance with and in the spirit of the relevant legislation.

3.3   The University will not discriminate on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, belief or sex in any decisions concerning student admissions, progression or provision of support.

3.4   The University will not discriminate on grounds of any protected characteristic, in decisions concerning staff recruitment and selection, career development, promotion, staff development opportunities, pay and remuneration, or reward and recognition.

3.5   The University will not discriminate against any person on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, belief or sex in the provision of facilities or services, or in the exercise of public functions.

3.6   In the provision of residential accommodation, the University will seek to provide an inclusive living and study environment. The University will not discriminate on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, belief or sex in this context.

3.7   Under-represented groups are encouraged to apply to work and study at the University. Where necessary, positive action may be applied.

3.8   The University will carry out monitoring, where practicable, by protected groups to ensure that all job applicants, applicants for

promotion and applicants for study are being fairly treated, and to support and inform the Equality Impact Assessment process.

3.9 The University will assess the impact of its policies and practices to identify and mitigate any disadvantage to protected groups.

4. University Responsibilities

The University will ensure that:

4.1   Staff and students are made aware of this Equality and Diversity Policy through the University's web pages, publications, induction and training provision, and through the line management structure, as appropriate.

4.2   Publicity material reflects the diversity of the University's community.

4.3   Staff, students and visitors are treated fairly, irrespective of their protected characteristics. The University will take prompt action over alleged discrimination, victimisation or harassment.

4.4   Reasonable adjustments are made, as appropriate, to enable disabled staff and students to overcome substantial disadvantage in the working and learning environment, and in the use of recreational facilities provided by the University.

4.5   Existing procedures for staff and student complaints, grievances and discipline/conduct matters are applied in a just, fair, open and timely manner.

4.6   Staff involved in staff recruitment, student admissions, selection and promotion panels receive training on equality and diversity matters.

4.7   External contractors are made aware of their responsibility in relation to equality and diversity and will be required to comply with University policies and regulations.

4.8   Learning and teaching material, where practical, shall include positive, diverse, non-stereotypical content.

4.9 Public events are held, wherever possible, in accessible locations, and where accessibility is limited by necessity, this is made clear to potential attendees.

5. Individual Responsibilities

5.1   All University staff, students, contractors and visitors have responsibilities under the Equality and Diversity Policy. All individuals are:

    5.1.1   Responsible for making themselves aware of the University Equality and Diversity Policy.

    5.1.2   Expected to participate in training that supports the implementation of the University's Equality and Diversity Policy, as appropriate.

    5.1.3   Responsible for their behaviour and expected to treat others with dignity and respect. This includes cases where alleged or proven discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation has occurred.

    5.1.4   To support the University's determination to promote good relations and eliminate discrimination and harassment.

5.2   Staff responsible for schemes of work, teaching content and resources should demonstrate sensitivity to equality and diversity issues.

5.3   Staff responsible for dealing with appeals, complaints, grievances, staff discipline and student conduct matters should demonstrate sensitivity to equality and diversity issues.

6. Unacceptable Actions or Behaviour

6.1   The Equality and Diversity Policy aims to ensure equality of opportunity and fair treatment for everyone. It is based on the principle that people have the right to their own beliefs, but not to engage in activities or acts that interfere with the rights or beliefs of others.

6.2   Any attempt to coerce or threaten others to comply with a particular belief system, for example through unauthorised distribution of literature, or through threats or offensive remarks, may result in disciplinary action.

6.3   The University does not tolerate offensive literature (whether disseminated in hard copy or electronically) or graffiti on its premises (subject to limited exceptions pursuant to academic freedom (i.e for use in academically valid research).

6.4   Examples of unacceptable behaviours are contained within the Statutes of KNUST, University's Conditions of Service, and Student Guide.

7. CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

7.1   Where staff and students perceive that they have been unfairly treated in respect of a protected characteristic, the following protocol shall apply:

    7.1.1   **Staff** should speak to their Head of Department in the first instance. Further advice can be sought from the Human Resources Division of the Registrar's Offices and Equality and Diversity Committee.

    7.1.2   **Students** should speak to their Academic Tutor in the first instance. Further advice can be sought from the Student Representative Council (SRC), Equality and Diversity Committee and office of the Dean of Students.

7.2   Whilst it is the intention that staff issues be addressed locally, there may occasionally be disagreement. In this event the help of the Human Resources Division of the Registrar's Offices or of the Equality and Diversity Committee may be sought.

7.3   Students may use the Office of the Dean of Students.

7.4   Members of the public should use the University Complaints Procedure contained in the University Statutes.

8. Monitoring and Review

8.1   The Equality and Diversity Committee (EDC) and the relevant Equality Working Groups will monitor the implementation and revision of this Policy.

8.2   The University will gather anonymised statistical information on the protected characteristics of staff and students in respect of the following:

    8.2.1   **Staff**: general composition of employees of the University, recruitment and selection, promotion, training and development (including Performance and Development Review outcomes), sickness, absence, grievances and disciplinary procedures.

    8.2.2   **Students**: general composition of the students of the University, admissions, retention, progression, degree classification, complaints, appeals and conduct.

8.3   Information collected will be reported to the Equality and Diversity Committee in the first instance, and will be used to inform future equality and diversity work across the institution.

8.4   This policy shall be reviewed in the event of a change to relevant legislation, and in any event on a biennial basis.

9. Other Relevant University Policies

This Policy forms part of the University's suite of policies that govern the day-to-day workings of the institution.

9.1   Information on staff-related policies can be found on the University's Human Resources Department website:

9.2   Information on student-related policies can be found on the University's website:

9.3   The Equality and Diversity Strategy and Action Plan can be found on the Equality and Diversity Committee website:

Appendix A: Legal Context and Definitions

A1.1 Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination is defined as treating one person less favourably than another, because of a protected characteristic.

A1.1.1 **Discrimination by association** is a type of direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

A1.1.2 **Discrimination by perception** is a type of direct discrimination against someone who is perceived to have a protected characteristic.

A1.2 Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination is when a provision, criterion or practice is applied, which particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified, if it can be shown to be a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.

A1.3 Discrimination arising from a disability

Discrimination arising from a disability is when someone is treated unfavourably because of something arising as a consequence of their disability. This type of discrimination can be justified, if it can be shown to be a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.

A1.4 Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for a person, or violating a person's dignity

A1.5 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment may involve the behaviour of a person of the opposite sex or of the same sex, and occurs when such behaviour constitutes unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favours, and other unwelcome verbal or physical behaviour of a sexual nature where:

a.   Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's education or employment;

b.   Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions affecting the individual's welfare; or

c.   Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's welfare, academic or work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive education or work environment.

A1.6 Victimisation

Victimisation is defined as treating a person less favourably because they have complained about discrimination or harassment, or helped someone else to do so.

Appendix B: Equality monitoring

B1   Monitoring is a key process for the successful implementation of equality and diversity policies and action plans, and conducting Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). Monitoring assists with highlighting positive and negative trends within the organisation and is particularly relevant to:

- Student and staff recruitment
- Student attainment
- Student retention
- Staff grades and occupational types
- Staff recruitment, development and promotion
- Take up of services by diverse groups
- Complaints

B2   Monitoring is required for the following reasons:

- To assist the University in providing an accurate picture of the diversity of its population and achievements.
- To assist with good practice by proving or disproving any myths about any minority group or its achievements.
- To meet requirement of external agencies.
- To aid the completion of Equality Impact Assessments.

B3   The benefits of monitoring

- To support institutional strategies, such as internationalisation
- To inform and improve policy and practice for staff and students

- To identify gaps or where there is under-representation

- To enable programmes of positive action

- To assist with measuring the quality of experience for diverse staff and students

- To ensure implementation of good practices

- To inform management and assist with objective decision making

Appendix C: Age

C1   Age requirements for certain courses

Decisions on admission to certain courses are made not only on the basis of qualifications achieved, but on maturity and experience judged necessary to successfully participate in aspects of the course, for example interaction with patients. This may result in some exceptionally young applicants not being admitted to the course. Courses will make their entry requirements clear to applicants, and will judge each case on its merits.

C2   Retirement Guidance for University staff

C2.1   Should a member of staff wish to retire, they should discuss it with their Head of Department, Director of Research Institute or University Service in the first instance, then contact the Human Resources Division to make the necessary arrangements.

C2.2   It is recognised that discussing future retirement provides the opportunity for both the member of staff and the University to plan for the future. This process can incorporate discussion with staff of all ages about where they see themselves in the next few years and their future contribution to the organisation. Where an employee indicates that they are considering retirement, a more detailed discussion can take place around their intentions. To avoid age discrimination, it is good practice to ensure that all staff are asked about their future plans. This does not preclude members of staff who are considering retirement discussing their plans with their Head of Department or Head of School/Dori/University Service at any point in the year.

C2.3   It is important to note that if a member of staff indicates in discussions that they intend to retire, this decision is not binding until they give formal notice.

C2.4   Opportunities must be created to enable older members who have retired from the University to liaise with their former department to share their experiences and impart knowledge.

Appendix D: Disability

D1   Definition of 'disability'

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

In addition, the University recognises the social model of disability, which defines disability as created by barriers in society such as inaccessible buildings, stereotyping and prejudice, and inflexible policies and practices. The University aims to eliminate such barriers for staff, students and visitors to campus.

D2   Supporting Infrastructure

D2.1   For students with a disability, mental health condition, or chronic medical condition, the first point of contact will be the **Welfare Office**. Students are encouraged to register with the Disability Service as early as possible in order to maximise the potential support available. This is particularly important if adjustments to exams are likely to be required.

D2.2   University staff may seek referral to the Welfare Office (Disability Service).

D2.3   The **Disability Equality Group** members have a responsibility for implementation of University strategies, policies and practices as they relate to disabled staff or students. Its remit includes supporting and advising the University on its legal obligations, promoting cultural change, considering implications of external good practice and overseeing the implementation and further development, as necessary, of policies and practices

relating to disability equality. The group consults with relevant stakeholders as appropriate. It reports to the Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee.

D2.4   The **Disability Infrastructure Working Group** is convened by Works and Development/Estates Offices and acts as the principal forum for consultation on access opportunities within the campus estates strategy and major developments within the University.

D2.5   There must be a concerted effort to ensure that all buildings are made user friendly for persons with disability with the installation of ramps and lifts.

D2.6   Resources and teaching aids such as Braille, computers with supportive software and so on must be made readily available for staff and students.

D3.   Two Ticks

The University must consider and adopt the 'two ticks' guaranteed interview scheme for job vacancies. This comprises five commitments:

- To interview all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for a vacancy and consider them on their abilities.

- To ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what can be done to make sure they can develop and use their abilities.

- To make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment.

- To take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make the commitments work.

- Each year to review the 5 commitments and what has been achieved, to plan ways to improve on them and to let employees know about progress and future plans.

D4. Reasonable Adjustments

D4.1 When shortlisted for interview, job applicants will be given the opportunity to indicate whether there are any reasonable adjustments that can be made in order for them to participate fully in the interview process.

D4.2 It is the responsibility of the Head of Department or Director of Research Institute, with support from the appropriate Human Resources Division, to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for a disabled employee. It is important that consultation is carried out with the disabled person prior to their starting work.

D4.3 Reasonable adjustments may include amending a provision, criterion or practice, altering premises, or providing auxiliary aids. A reasonable adjustment does not include lowering of competence standards.

D4.4 Advice and guidance on reasonable adjustments can be obtained from the Welfare Office.

D4.5 Assistance with the cost of aids and equipment, alteration to premises, and personal support may be available from Welfare Office.

D4.6 Disabled students should consult with the Dean of Students office, as early as possible in their course, with regard to reasonable adjustments to enable them to participate as fully as possible in their course of study. Examples may include assistive technology, extra time in exams or a note-taking service. Assistance may include an application for Disabled Students Allowance to help towards the cost of any aids, services or equipment.

D4.7 Visitors to the University may also request reasonable adjustments to enable them to use the University's facilities and services. Depending on the nature of the visit, this may include information in alternative formats, a hearing loop system, accessibility to public events and venues, and arrangements for emergency evacuation of disabled visitors.

D5. Staff or students who become disabled at work or study

D5.1 Every effort will be made to ensure that the staff member or student can continue in employment, or on their programme of study. This may include reasonable adjustments, depending on the nature of the situation. The staff member or student will be consulted fully.

D5.2 Possible options for staff could include modification of the post, redeployment, early retirement or termination of employment on the grounds of incapacity. Termination or early retirement can only be justifiable if the disability makes it impossible for the individual to perform the main functions of the job, and if redeployment is not practicable.

D5.3 An employee who becomes disabled at work should discuss the situation and their requirements with their Head of Department or Director of Research Institute or with the Deputy Registrar in charge of Human Resources.

D5.4 A student who becomes disabled during their programme of study should discuss the situation and their requirements with their Academic Tutor and the Dean of Students.

Appendix E: Race/Ethnicity

E1 Definition of 'race'

Race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

E2 Equality Outcomes

A number of the University's Equality Outcomes under the Public Sector Equality Duty are linked to the protected characteristic of race/ethnicity. These include work on:

- Inclusive and accessible learning materials

- Investigating and reducing any disparities in degree attainment for students from different protected characteristic groups

- Addressing retention and progression issues based on protected characteristic groups

- Increasing the diversity of the Professoriate and management positions

- Fostering a supportive culture which promotes dignity and respect and where all staff feel valued and inappropriate behaviours are challenged

E3   Other relevant University policies

The University commits to providing a culturally diverse learning environment and community for students and staff.

Appendix F: Religion and Belief

F1 Definition of 'religion or belief'

F1.1 References to religion and belief include any religious or philosophical belief, or lack of religion or belief.

F1.2 The freedom to manifest one's religion or belief is not an absolute right, but is qualified, in that it may be interfered with if there is a threat to public order or safety, health or morals, or the rights and freedoms of others. Any interference must be lawful and proportionate.

F2 Supporting Infrastructure

F2.1 The **Chaplaincy** provides spiritual support and facilities for staff and students of all faiths and none. The University is strongly committed to interfaith working.

F2.2 There are a number of faith-based **student societies** – a current list is available via the Students Representative Council.

F3 Faith and reflection facilities

F3.1 The Protestant Chapel is open for worship by Presbyterian and Anglicans alike at different times

F3.2 The Catholic Chaplaincy provides a venue for worship on the Campus

F3.3 The Protestant Chaplaincy also provides storage facilities and aids for worship in support of the various faith societies.

F3.4   The Muslim Community (MUSLICOM) mosque is open for
        worship by all Muslims

F4   Code of Practice for implementing the Equality and Diversity Policy with respect to Religion and Belief.

F4.1   Religious observance

F4.1.1 The University will make all reasonable efforts to provide
        suitable accommodation for prayer and religious
        observance, or quiet contemplation where practical.

F4.1.2 All staff, regardless of their religion and belief, are required
        to work in accordance with their contract. There is likely
        to be some flexibility over how the hours are worked
        whilst still meeting service/business needs. Heads of
        Schools/ Departments and Administrative Heads should
        make every attempt to ensure that those whose religion
        requires them to pray at certain times during the day
        are enabled to do so through agreed flexible working
        arrangements. In addition, a similar effort should be
        made to accommodate requests from those who require,
        for example, an extra hour for midday prayer on Friday,
        or not to work beyond sunset on Friday, or (in the case
        of staff whose normal contracted hours of work would
        include weekend working) at the weekends in ways which
        conflict with their religious beliefs. Similar requests from
        students should also be considered sympathetically.

F4.2   Leave for religious festivals and extended leave

F4.2.1 In Ghana some public holidays coincide with Christian
        religious festivals and holiday arrangements. In the
        interests of equality, those practising religions other
        than Christianity may request annual leave entitlement
        on dates most significant to them. These days should
        be agreed with the Heads of Schools/ Departments and
        Administrative Heads before timetables or assessment
        dates are drawn up. Requests for holiday entitlement

to be taken at times of religious significance, the dates of which are uncertain in some religions (e.g. based on the lunar calendar) will be treated sympathetically. The number of annual leave days overall will remain as in the contract of employment for staff of any religious belief or none.

F4.2.2 Staff may request occasional extended leave associated with religious or cultural needs. Administrative Heads should attempt to accommodate requests for extended leave for the purpose of, for example, going on pilgrimage. If the extended leave exceeds annual holiday entitlement, the excess days will be counted as unpaid leave.

F4.2.3 If unclear, advice should be sought from the Equality and Diversity Unit or Human Resources Department.

F4.3 Assessments, Examinations, Interviews and Placements

F4.3.1 The University expects every student to take full responsibility for their academic work and progress, including class/placement attendance, assessed assignments and examinations.

F4.3.2 However, the University recognizes that there are circumstances where students may require to be absent, including religious observance, where the nature of the observance prevents attendance at a class or classes.

F4.3.3 Heads of Schools, Directors of Services, Registry and Examination Officers should consider the main religious festivals when drawing up assessment, examination and interview dates (for student admissions and staff appointments).

F4.3.4 Reasonable requests from students for extensions to assessment submission deadlines to accommodate religious observance should be considered sympathetically, but only if requests are received as soon as the deadlines are announced.

F4.3.5 Consideration in examination timetabling requirements will be given to requests from students whose religious observance may result in absence on certain week days or at weekends, or at other times for specific religious festivals, but only if such requests are made early around the time of class enrolment and within 3 weeks of the start of the semester. Later requests, especially if made after examination timetables have been published, may not be granted.

F4.3.6 Similar considerations as in G3.3.5 would be given to students on placements.

F4.5 Dress Code

F4.5.1 The University does not operate an overarching dress code for staff and students, except for uniformed staff (such as janitorial, security and hospitality staff), and those staff and students required to wear protective clothing, for example in laboratories and workshops. Local arrangements regarding appropriate standards of dress (particularly in service areas) may apply.

F4.5.2 The wearing of religious and cultural dress, including clerical collars, headscarves, turbans and kipa (skull cap) is allowed and must not be discouraged. The exception to this is where the health, safety and welfare of the person is compromised by the wearing of such dress, or whether this is likely to enhance the risk to other persons, or where communication is hindered.

F4.5.3 Students wearing face-coverings (e.g. niqab or burqa) may be required to remove these for the purposes of identification prior to the start of an examination. The University will ensure that such requests are made sensitively and that provision is made for the face-covering to be removed in private, in the presence of a female member of staff only.

F4.5.4 The following points should be noted:

- Some religions and cultures determine a certain mode of dress. For example, the wearing of compulsory items such as the Kara (bangle) by Sikh men and women.

- Wearing of clothes displaying offensive material, in any language, or which are in some other way offensive and may breach national law (for example, sectarian or racist slogans) will be considered a breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy and other University policies and regulations.

- Where necessary, the Equality and Diversity Unit may be contacted to assist with disseminating appropriate information explaining cultural dress and customs.

Appendix G: Sex (Gender) including Pregnancy and Maternity

G1 Legal Context

Both men and women are protected from discrimination because of their sex.

G2 Equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap

The University will strive to eliminate gender bias in pay and remuneration processes. To this end, the University will publish equal pay and gender pay gap information and an equal pay action plan.

G3 Charter Marks

The University is committed to taking steps towards the following objectives:

- Increasing the percentage of women in senior academic leadership roles.

- Increasing the percentage of women in senior administrative/specialist/professional leadership roles.

- Increasing the number of women applying to administrative/specialist/professional posts.

- Increasing the number of women applying to academic posts.

- Increasing the percentage of women progressing to higher academic grades.

- Facilitating the return to work of staff from maternity, paternity and adoption leave.

- Improving the work/life balance of staff, particularly those with childcare responsibilities.

G4 Other relevant University policies

G4.1 Student maternity, maternity support policy:

G4.2 Human Resources policies

- maternity leave

- paternity leave

- parental leave

- flexible working