

Equal Opportunities Policy (2016)

1.0 Summary

1.1 Aberystwyth University is committed to developing, promoting and supporting equality and diversity in all our practices and activities. We aim to provide an inclusive culture for work and study, free from discrimination and upholding the values of respect, dignity and courtesy. Every person has the right to be treated in accordance with these values.

1.2 Within our Charter, Equality of Opportunity is also outlined as a fundamental principle such that

“Eligibility for appointment to any Office, employment or membership of the Council, Senate, Court or any other University body, and eligibility to undertake or admission to any course of study, or for the award of any academic distinction of the University, shall be based on the principle of equal opportunity and in accordance with all the provisions of law and good practice.”

1.3 We are committed to advancing equality on the grounds of age, disability, sex and sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion and belief (including lack of belief), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity / paternity, and to embrace intersectionality and raise awareness between and across different groups.

1.4 This commitment is underpinned by the University’s Strategic Plan 2012 - 2017 which emphasises our commitment to creating opportunities:

1.4.1 *‘to break down the barriers to access, supporting students and staff to succeed and grow’* and includes the importance of “Aber Values” including

1.4.2 *‘celebrating the individual contribution of each colleague and each student, we work to enable all to reach their full potential and to remove barriers to success’.*

2.0 Policy & Practice

The University is therefore committed to a policy and practice which require that,

2.1 For students, admission to the University and progression within undergraduate and graduate studies will be determined by personal merit and performance.

- 2.2 For staff, employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined by personal merit and by the application of criteria which are clear and transparent.
- 2.3 Subject to statutory provisions, 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 because of her or his belonging to a protected group, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.4 If any person admitted as a student or appointed as a member of staff considers that they are suffering from unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimization (directly or indirectly) in admissions, appointment, or progression through the University because of belonging to any of the above protected groups, they may make a complaint, which will be dealt with through the agreed procedures for
- (a) Students – Academic Quality and Records Office Complaints Procedure
www.aber.ac.uk/en/regulations/complaints/
 - (b) Staff - either the Dignity & Respect at Work Policy
www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/policy-and-procedure/dignity/
or Staff Grievance Procedure
www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/policy-and-procedure/grievance/.
- 2.5 The Equal Opportunities Policy is enacted through the University's Equality Objectives, as laid out in the Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020 and the associated Action Plan. Progression against actions and objectives are reported in the Equality and Diversity Annual Reports, published by 31st March each year.
(www.aber.ac.uk/en/equality/equality-reports/)

3.0 Statutory Obligations & Legislation

The University will meet all statutory obligations under relevant legislation and, where appropriate, anticipate future legal requirements.

- 3.1 Currently, this is informed by legislation containing elements relating to equal opportunities and which provide certain prescribed statutory rights to individuals including The Equality Act (2010) and associated secondary legislation, including the Public Sector Equality Duty in Wales.
- 3.2 Additional legislation links can be found on the Equality and Diversity, HR, Student Support, Careers and Academic Quality & Records webpages.
- 3.3 In addition, Aberystwyth University are informed by the Codes of Practice or Guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and other relevant bodies. These Codes are not legally binding (though they are admissible as evidence in Employment Tribunals) and the University supports them fully.
- 3.4 The University is a bilingual institution and operates a Welsh Language Scheme.

4.0 Monitoring

Aberystwyth University will monitor the effectiveness of its policies and procedures in eliminating unfairness and discrimination from its Student admissions and progressions within undergraduate and graduate studies, and within its employment practices.

This will be assisted by the development and implementation of a robust and transparent Equality Impact Assessment system.

This policy will be amended as appropriate to meet the demands of future legislation.

Further information is available on the Equality and Diversity pages, and on the website of the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Equality Challenge Unit.

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>
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