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Equality and Diversity Policy

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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Revision History

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1.0	April, 2020	All Sections	New Document
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Dissemination

Through OUC Student Support Service Portal and website to all OUC students and staff.

Internal Control and Validation

To ensure compliance with this policy and procedure:

- The Dean, Academic Affairs is responsible for the implementation.
- The Academic Registry will maintain the control and compliance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.1. POLICY OBJECTIVE	4
1.2. DOMAIN OF IMPLEMENTATION	4
1.3. DEFINITIONS	4
1.4. ABBREVIATIONS	5
1.5. GENERAL PRINCIPLES	5
1.6. OUC'S COMMITMENT	5
1.6.1. Contractors, Visitors, and Other People not employed by the College	5
1.6.2. Accessibility and Communication	5
1.6.3. Consultation	6
1.6.4. Monitoring	6
1.6.5. The General and Specific Commitments	6
1.7. EQUALITY STATEMENT	6
1.7.1. Disability/ Special Needs	6
1.7.2. Race	7
1.7.3. Gender (Sex)	7
1.7.4. Religion and Belief, or non-Belief	8
1.7.5. Sexual Orientation	8
1.7.6. Age	9
1.7.7. Marriage and Civil Partnership	9
1.7.8. Pregnancy and Maternity	10
1.8. POLICY ITEMS	10
1.8.1. Hate Crimes	10
1.8.2. Promoting Dignity at Work and In the Learning Environment	10
1.8.3. Staff Development and Training	11
1.8.4. Family Friendly Practices	11
1.8.5. Job Satisfaction	11
1.8.6. Staff Appraisal – Personal Development & Performance Review (PDPR)	11
1.8.7. Responsibilities – Staff and Students	12
1.8.8. Procedures for dealing with complaints	12
1.9. ADVICE AND INFORMATION	12

1.1. Policy Objective

- 1.1.1. OUC is committed to promoting equal opportunities for all those involved within the College community, whether staff, students, visitors, contractors, or clients.
- 1.1.2. This commitment is to ensure that people’s individual qualities are recognized and celebrated; and that people are treated with dignity and respect.
- 1.1.3. The College recognizes that discrimination, harassment, and victimization may be experienced by some protected characteristics in several ways, including day-to-day interaction with colleagues, peers, visitors, students, and staff.
- 1.1.4. The College will ensure that equality of opportunity is promoted by recognizing and celebrating diversity, continuing our proactive equality strategies and plans.

1.2. Domain of Implementation

- 1.2.1. OUC and Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) has a tradition of policy and practice in promoting equal opportunities.
- 1.2.2. OUC Management and the Board of Trustees have endorsed the commitment to equality through various initiatives, for example, initiatives to promote equality among all staff, commitment to ensure equality in recruitment and selection, and the declaration of our commitment to equal opportunities in all job advertisements.
- 1.2.3. OUC as a collaborative partner of LJMU, respects and recognizes the Equality and Diversity Policy of LJMU and commits to adapt the LJMU policy within the legal framework of the State of Qatar.

1.3. Definitions

<i>Discrimination</i>	The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, sex, or disability.
<i>Inequality</i>	The quality of being unequal or uneven: such as. a: social disparity. b: disparity of distribution or opportunity.

1.4. Abbreviations

OUC	Oryx Universal College
PDPR	Personal Development & Performance Review
LJMU	Liverpool John Moores university

1.5. General Principles

- 1.5.1. OUC will continue to ensure that people are supported to join the College community, either as students or staff and, where possible, provide appropriate services and a welcoming environment which will meet the cultural, linguistic, and spiritual needs of our staff and student communities.
- 1.5.2. The Equality and Diversity Policy applies to all the College's practices and processes, which include student recruitment and widening participation, recruitment and selection of staff, terms and conditions of employment, promotion, training, conditions of work, pay, treatment at work and termination of employment.
- 1.5.3. This is a policy document and therefore does not form part of the contract of employment. Any changes to the policies are at the discretion of the College.

1.6. OUC's Commitment

1.6.1. Contractors, Visitors, and Other People not employed by the College

- 1.6.1.1. OUC will endeavor that all contractors and visitors are made aware of the College's Equality and Diversity Policy and all relevant College regulations to ensure that they treat individuals with dignity and respect.
- 1.6.1.2. Where these are breached the College reserves the right to take appropriate action.

1.6.2. Accessibility and Communication

- 1.6.2.1. The College will strive to make all its facilities accessible to staff and students regardless of any seen or unseen impairments.
- 1.6.2.2. The College also recognizes that it is essential to put procedures in place to handle complaints in the most constructive way.

1.6.3. Consultation

- 1.6.3.1. The College will continue to consult with community groups & organizations to ensure that innovative ways of recruiting individuals either as staff or students are used.
- 1.6.3.2. In addition, the College will continue to carry out consultation exercises to ensure adequate promotion and celebration of people's individual qualities within the College community.
- 1.6.3.3. The College will also continue to carry out adequate consultation on our policies, practices, and procedures to ensure fulfilment of the commitment to promote equal opportunities within the College.

1.6.4. Monitoring

- 1.6.4.1. The College will continue to carry out equality impact analysis on all its policies, processes, projects, procedures, and
- 1.6.4.2. Draft policies to ensure that there are no negative, adverse, or detrimental impacts or effect on any of the equality groups.

1.6.5. The General and Specific Commitments

The college aims to.

- 1.6.5.1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimization, and any other conduct.
- 1.6.5.2. Advance equal opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 1.6.5.3. Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

1.7. Equality Statement

1.7.1. Disability/ Special Needs

- 1.7.1.1. OUC is committed to challenging disability and special needs discrimination and inequality in all its practices and activities. This commitment is consistent with the significant progress the College has already made in this area.
- 1.7.1.2. OUC Management affirm their commitment for considering disability and special needs equality in all activities and in all areas of the College's responsibilities.

- 1.7.1.3. The College will implement best practice in compliance with legislation and provide reasonable supportive measures that will meet the specific needs of the staff, students, contractors, and visitors with disabilities or special needs.
- 1.7.1.4. The College will provide reasonable adjustments where possible to enable staff, students, contractors, and visitors to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Where necessary, a risk assessment may be undertaken and / or external specialist advice sought.
- 1.7.1.5. The College will respect the wish for confidentiality by people with disabilities or special needs. Therefore, any support measure implemented will be mutually agreed and acceptable to the individuals concerned.
- 1.7.1.6. OUC will consult regularly with staff, students and, where appropriate, external organizations, to inform policy development and change practices where necessary and to continue to promote positive images of disabled people in all our materials.

1.7.2. Race

- 1.7.2.1. OUC is committed to challenging discrimination on the grounds of race in all its practices and activities. The College affirm their responsibility for implementing race equality in all activities and in all areas of the College's practices. The College will endeavor to:
 - 1.7.2.1.1. Assess the impact of race equality activities on students and staff of different racial groups.
 - 1.7.2.1.2. Monitor its workforce & ensure people from ethnic minorities are treated fairly.
 - 1.7.2.1.3. Assess its policies and programmes as they affect ethnic minorities, and deal with any possible adverse impact.
 - 1.7.2.1.4. Engage in more consultation exercises with racial minority groups.

1.7.3. Gender (Sex)

- 1.7.3.1. Both men and women are protected by laws of the state of Qatar. OUC is committed to challenging sex discrimination and inequality in all its practices and activities.
- 1.7.3.2. The College affirms their responsibility for implementing gender equality in all activities and practices of the College.
- 1.7.3.3. This commitment is consistent with the significant progress the State of Qatar has already made in this area. The College will mainstream gender equality by ensuring that it is built into all aspects of the College's business.
- 1.7.3.4. This duty applies to all OUC's functions not just in education provision,

employment, and service delivery but, for example, in budget setting, course validation, procurement and strategic planning.

1.7.4. Religion and Belief, or non-Belief

- 1.7.4.1. OUC is committed to challenging discrimination on the ground of religion and belief or non-belief. The College affirm their responsibilities for ensuring equality on the ground of religion and belief or non-belief in all activities and practices of the College. This commitment is consistent with the significant measures that the State of Qatar has put in place in this area.
- 1.7.4.2. The College recognizes that it is a fundamental human right to hold a religion or belief or non-belief and that right should be treated with respect. With the understanding that people can experience discrimination or be treated differently because of their religion, belief(s), or non-belief, the College will, where practicable, ensure a community where people can practice their religion or belief(s). The College will ensure that:
 - 1.7.4.2.1. Students and staff who hold a religion or belief or non-belief are treated equally and fairly.
 - 1.7.4.2.2. Students and staff are made aware and are sensitive and tolerant of other people's religion and belief and non-beliefs.
 - 1.7.4.2.3. Where practicable, consideration will be given to student and staff requirements to pray in any form based on the nature and depth of their personal belief and practice.
 - 1.7.4.2.4. Consideration will be given to students and staff who need time off for festivals that are part of their religion or belief.
- 1.7.4.3. LJMU's policy on Religion and Belief is available in the Policy Centre & OUC commits to adapt this policy subject to applicable laws and decrees in the State of Qatar.

1.7.5. Sexual Orientation

- 1.7.5.1. OUC is committed to challenging discrimination & inequality in all its forms and circumstances.
- 1.7.5.2. The College affirm their responsibility for implementing equal treatment for everyone regardless of sexual orientation in all activities & practices of the College.
- 1.7.5.3. The College will not tolerate any form of discrimination against anyone. To this end, the College will strive to comply with all requirements related to protected characteristics in compliance to applicable laws and decrees in the State of Qatar.

1.7.6. Age

- 1.7.6.1. OUC is committed to challenging discrimination and inequality with regard to age in all its practices and activities. The College affirm their responsibility for implementing equality for everyone regardless of their age in all activities and practices of the College.
- 1.7.6.2. The College recognizes that people can be discriminated against because of their age and will not tolerate any form of age discrimination.
- 1.7.6.3. The College will continue to appreciate the valuable contributions made by staff and students of all ages in terms of quality of experiences brought to learning, teaching, research, support services, consultancy, enterprise, administration, professional services, and management.
- 1.7.6.4. As part of their managerial responsibilities, all managers have a professional obligation to eliminate age discrimination.
- 1.7.6.5. All individuals will be personally accountable for their behavior, actions and/or lack of actions in cases of complaint of harassment.
- 1.7.6.6. All individuals involved within the College community must recognize that ageism is harmful and undermines the contributions that young people and older people can make to an organization.
- 1.7.6.7. The College will take necessary positive action to recruit younger and older people to ensure an age balance in the workforce ensuring we do not miss out on the valuable range of contributions that staff and students of different ages can bring to the College learning environment and workforce.

1.7.7. Marriage and Civil Partnership

- 1.7.7.1. All the clauses below made in the policy, are in compliance with relevant laws of State of Qatar.
- 1.7.7.2. The College will not tolerate any form of discrimination against anyone. To this end, the College will work to ensure that the marriage and other relationships are respected and not discriminated within the College, subject to applicable laws and decrees in the State of Qatar.
- 1.7.7.3. OUC is committed to challenging discrimination and inequality with regard to marriage and civil partnership status in all its practices and activities.
- 1.7.7.4. The College affirms their responsibility for implementing equality for everyone regardless of marriage and civil partnership status in all activities and responsibilities of the College.

1.7.8. Pregnancy and Maternity

- 1.7.8.1. All the clauses below are made in the policy are in compliance with relevant laws of State of Qatar.
- 1.7.8.2. OUC is committed to challenging discrimination and inequality with regard to pregnancy, maternity, paternity, and adoption in all its practices and activities.
- 1.7.8.3. The College affirms their responsibility for implementing equality for everyone regardless of pregnancy, maternity, paternity and adoption in all activities and practices of the College.
- 1.7.8.4. The College will not tolerate any form of discrimination against anyone including people who are pregnant or people who are, or will be on maternity, paternity, or adoption leave.

1.8. Policy Items

1.8.1. Hate Crimes

- 1.8.1.1. The College will endeavor to create an educational environment which is free from hate crime directed towards individuals or groups because of their distinct characteristics.
- 1.8.1.2. The College recognizes that acts of hate crime(s) will not promote good relations between the diverse groups represented in the College community and undermine the principle of dignity and respect. Thus, such behaviors will be carefully investigated, and necessary actions taken subject to applicable laws and decrees in the State of Qatar.
- 1.8.1.3. Staff who experience or witness any hate crime(s) on campus should contact the College's management who will be able to recommend the appropriate action. In the case of students, the Student Development or the Academic Registry should be first point of contact.

1.8.2. Promoting Dignity at Work and In the Learning Environment

- 1.8.2.1. The College is committed to promoting practices that consider the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect.
- 1.8.2.2. OUC recognizes that discrimination, victimization, bullying and harassment may be experienced in several ways, including day-to-day interaction with colleagues, peers, students, and visitors.

- 1.8.2.3. The aim is to promote a positive environment and reduce stress, illness and absenteeism and prevent any individual from being forced to give up work or studies because of perceived issues in this area.

1.8.3. Staff Development and Training

- 1.8.3.1. All staff will be given the opportunity to develop themselves and undertake appropriate qualifications relevant to their post and/ or progression opportunities.
- 1.8.3.2. To comply with good practice, the College will monitor staff take-up of courses for personal development and progression.
- 1.8.3.3. Staff involved in the recruitment of students or staff will be provided with training on the Assessment of Prior Learning and equal opportunities good practice.
- 1.8.3.4. All staff joining the OUC community are required to undertake training in equality and diversity where their duty to promote equal opportunity in every aspect of their activities is highlighted.

1.8.4. Family Friendly Practices

- 1.8.4.1. The College will seek to create, where practicable, opportunities for family-friendly working practices and arrangements with protection of employment rights according to the Labour Law of Qatar.

1.8.5. Job Satisfaction

- 1.8.5.1. The College will monitor factors that impact on staff satisfaction such as absenteeism and staff turnover.
- 1.8.5.2. When appropriate, staff opinion surveys will be conducted to inform both job satisfaction and career progression prospects.

1.8.6. Staff Appraisal – Personal Development & Performance Review (PDPR)

- 1.8.6.1. Appraisal practices are monitored to ensure compliance with equal opportunities policies.
- 1.8.6.2. An element of the PDPR process is concerned with skills or aptitudes relevant to the job performance and
- 1.8.6.3. Areas where staff development and support are required will be identified.

1.8.7. Responsibilities – Staff and Students

- 1.8.7.1. The co-operation of everyone within the College community (staff, students, contractors, clients, and visitors) is essential to the success of this policy.
- 1.8.7.2. Staff teams are expected to carry out their activities in a fair and consistent way ensuring that their procedures and practices comply with equal opportunities policies and regulations as they perform their day-to-day duties.
- 1.8.7.3. Students are also expected to promote dignity and respect in all their engagements with other students and staff as they undertake their studies and activities.

1.8.8. Procedures for dealing with complaints

- 1.8.8.1. The College is committed to dealing with complaints from staff, students, visitors, clients, and contractors in a fair, just, timely and transparent manner.
- 1.8.8.2. Students who wish to make a formal complaint should use the latest version of the published Students Complaints Procedure. Staff wishing to make a formal complaint should contact the Peoples and Culture Department.

1.9. Advice and Information

- 1.9.1. The OUC Academic Registry Staff are available to advise Students on matters such as concerns about equality, related matters, etc. procedures. If students wish to contact, they can do so at Academic Registry.
- 1.9.2. Information on this Policy and Procedures are available on the College's Webpages at <https://www.oryx.edu.qa/policies/> or by contacting the Academic Registry via telephone numbers +974 4021 0000 or via email at registry@oryx.edu.qa.
- 1.9.3. Further information and contact details are available on the College Web pages at <https://www.oryx.edu.qa/>.