



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Policy Details	
Policy Owner	Assistant Principal Student Experience
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Approved by	Policies & Procedures Committee, Quality Committee, Corporation Board
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1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1** USP College is committed to advancing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) across every aspect of college life. We believe that education transforms lives; and that an inclusive, respectful and equitable community enables every learner and member of staff to reach their full potential.
- 1.2** Our approach goes beyond compliance with the Equality Act (2010). We actively celebrate diversity, tackle inequality, and foster a culture of belonging in which everyone feels seen, safe, and supported.
- 1.3** EDI underpins our mission to deliver outstanding education and training, improve life chances, and contribute positively to our diverse Essex communities.
- 1.4** The Equality Diversity & Inclusion Policy covers all staff, current students, prospective students and contractors.
- 1.5** USP College will deliver an inclusive curriculum reflecting diverse perspectives, integrate EDI into tutorials and staff development, celebrate diversity through campaigns like Black History Month and Pride, and strengthen community partnerships to promote equality and social mobility.

2. Scope and Application

2.1 This policy applies to all members of the USP College community, including students, staff, governors, contractors, volunteers, and visitors. It covers all college activities and environments — whether on campus, online, or offsite — and applies equally to teaching, learning, employment, governance, partnerships, and community engagement.

3. Defining Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 3.1** Equality means creating a fair and just environment where everyone has equal access to opportunities and support to succeed.
- 3.2** Diversity means recognising, respecting and valuing individual differences, perspectives and contributions.
- 3.3** Inclusion means ensuring that everyone feels welcomed, involved and empowered to participate fully in college life.
- 3.4** USP College also recognises socio-economic background and caring responsibilities as important factors in equality of opportunity, even though they are not legally protected characteristics.

4. Linked / Related Policies

- Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Student Behaviour and Conduct Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Accessibility and Estates Strategy
- Curriculum Design and Quality Policy
- Complaints and Grievance Procedures

5. Legal Background or Relevant Legislation and Guidance

- 5.1** This policy is guided by the Equality Act (2010), which protects individuals from discrimination based on the following protected characteristics:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership (for eliminating discrimination)
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- 5.2** The College also aligns with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Act.
- USP College must have due regard to the need to:
- a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
 - b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - c. Foster good relations between different groups, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 5.3** These duties are embedded in all decision-making, curriculum design, staff and student recruitment, and community partnerships.

6. Equality Objectives (2025–2028)

USP College will pursue the following measurable objectives:

- 6.1** USP College will embed equality, representation and decolonisation across all curriculum areas. This will ensure that teaching, learning and assessment reflect diverse perspectives, experiences and identities,

enabling all learners to see themselves represented and valued within the curriculum.

- 6.2** USP College will take purposeful action to improve retention, achievement, value-added and progression rates for under-represented and disadvantaged groups. Data will be monitored closely, and targeted interventions will be implemented where disparities are identified to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed.
- 6.3** USP College will increase participation and accessibility by ensuring fair and transparent admissions processes, inclusive marketing practices, proactive outreach, and targeted bursary support. The College will work to remove barriers that may prevent individuals from engaging fully in education and training.
- 6.4** USP College will continue to promote a workforce that reflects the communities it serves. This includes taking steps to narrow gender and ethnicity pay gaps, increasing staff disclosure rates, and strengthening representation within leadership and governance roles. Recruitment and professional development processes will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are inclusive and equitable.
- 6.5** USP College will empower students to play an active role in shaping the College's equality, diversity and inclusion agenda. Students will be supported to co-lead equality initiatives through forums, focus groups and student societies, creating a culture where everyone's voice is heard and valued.
- 6.6** USP College will ensure that its physical and digital environments are safe, welcoming and accessible for all. Estates and IT systems will be regularly reviewed to remove barriers to access and to provide an inclusive experience for staff, students and visitors.
- 6.7** Progress against these equality objectives will be reviewed annually through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. Findings and actions will be reported to the Senior Management Team (SMT) and the Corporation Board, and outcomes will be published on the College website.
- 6.7** USP College will continue to develop equality initiatives in partnership with staff, students, and community stakeholders to ensure lived experiences shape improvement.
- 6.9** Progress towards these objectives will be driven through the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, which outlines specific key performance indicators (KPIs), responsible leads, and timelines to measure impact and ensure accountability.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1** All contractors and partners are required to demonstrate alignment with the College's EDI standards as part of procurement or partnership agreements.

- 7.2** The Corporation Board holds the statutory responsibility for ensuring that USP College complies with the Equality Act 2010 and the PSED. The Board approves and monitors the College's equality objectives, reviews annual progress reports, and provides oversight to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded across all aspects of the College's operations and strategic direction.
- 7.3** The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has overall accountability for ensuring that the College meets its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the PSED. The CEO provides strategic leadership and ensures that equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to the College's overall vision, values and culture. The CEO is responsible for setting the tone and expectations for inclusive leadership across all departments.
- 7.4** The Principal is responsible for leading on the implementation of the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. This includes ensuring that equality and inclusion are embedded within teaching, learning, assessment and the wider student experience. The Principal ensures that staff and students understand their roles in promoting inclusion and that curriculum and quality processes reflect the College's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- 7.5** The SMT is responsible for integrating equality, diversity and inclusion into all strategic and operational areas of the College. This includes embedding inclusive practice across curriculum planning, human resources, student services and community engagement. The SMT monitors performance data, reviews progress against equality objectives, and takes targeted action where inequalities are identified.
- 7.6** Curriculum and Business Support Managers are responsible for embedding equality, diversity and inclusion within their respective areas of responsibility. They ensure that Self-Assessment Reports (SARs), Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) and operational processes promote equality of opportunity, celebrate diversity and remove barriers to participation.
- 7.7** All members of staff, irrespective of role or contractual status, are expected to promote equality, diversity and inclusion through their everyday practice. Staff must model inclusive behaviours, challenge discrimination or prejudice, and engage in mandatory equality and unconscious bias training to ensure they contribute positively to an inclusive college culture.
- 7.8** All students are expected to uphold the College's values of respect, equality and inclusion throughout their studies. Students are encouraged to take an active role in promoting inclusivity by participating in events, campaigns and forums that celebrate diversity and strengthen the sense of belonging across the College community.
- 7.9** The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is a cross-college body comprising of staff and student representatives. It is responsible for monitoring progress against the College's equality objectives and associated action plan. The Committee provides advice, guidance and

recommendations to SMT and submits regular progress reports to the Corporation Board.

- 7.10** An annual EDI Report will be published on the College website by July each year, summarising progress and outlining next steps for improvement.

8. Implementation and Continuous Improvement

- 8.1** USP College will collect and publish annual equality data on students, staff and governance, analysing recruitment, achievement, pay gaps and accessibility.
- 8.2** Findings will inform annual reports to SMT and Corporation, and quality improvement planning.
- 8.3** Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are mandatory for all new and reviewed policies, procedures and strategic plans. Any actions identified through an EIA must be recorded, monitored and reviewed through the annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan to ensure continuous improvement and accountability.

10. Training and Awareness

- 10.1** All new staff and governors receive EDI induction training, with refresher training bi-annually. Students receive awareness sessions during induction and tutorials.

11. Breaches of Policy

- 11.1** Any breach of this policy by staff, students or contractors will be treated as a serious matter and handled under disciplinary or grievance procedures.