

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

### Introduction

1. Birkbeck College Students' Union is fully committed to the principles set out in this policy and will work together with its stakeholders to champion equality, diversity, and inclusion and respect the rights of all individuals. This policy is importantly based in the Birkbeck College values and ethos of the Students' Union.

### Purpose of the Policy

2. This policy has been created to outline the responsibilities of Birkbeck College Students' Union under the UK Equality Act 2010 and will be reviewed and updated as legislation and societal norms change. Birkbeck College Students' Union and its stakeholders are committed to the principle of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no person or persons are unlawfully discriminated against because of their protected characteristics<sup>1</sup>:

Age

Disability

Gender Reassignment

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Pregnancy and Maternity

Race (including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality)

Religion or Belief (including lack of belief)

Sex

Sexual Orientation

3. Birkbeck College Students' Union chooses to extend its commitment to Neurodiversity (differences in how people's brains work) and Socio-Economic diversity (differences in people's income and social backgrounds) - although it is not legally required or obliged to do so.

### Discrimination

4. Key to ensuring that the culture of Birkbeck College Students' Union reflects its values, the first step is for early conversations to be held to address inappropriate or unhelpful behaviours, and to do so sensitively and promptly. Birkbeck Students' Union staff, officers and volunteers are expected to uphold these values in all student spaces, including online, to ensure an inclusive environment for students.

---

<sup>1</sup> As listed in the UK Equality Act 2010.

5. Birkbeck College Students' Union recognises the following as being unacceptable:
  - **Direct Discrimination:** treating someone less favourably than you would treat others because of a protected characteristic.
  - **Indirect Discrimination:** applying a provision, criterion or practice which seemingly applies equally to all, but practically can disadvantage individuals with a particular protected characteristic. An example might be introducing a dress code that indirectly disadvantages a certain group of people e.g. prohibiting hairstyles or clothes that might typically be worn by certain racial, ethnic or religious groups.
  - **Harassment:** engaging in unwanted conduct (both physical and verbal) relating to a relevant protected characteristic or unwanted conduct where it has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient, or any other individual effected by this conduct.
  - **Bullying:** misuse of power or position to criticise persistently; or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence irrespective of their position or power.
  - **Victimisation:** Subjecting someone to a detriment because they have in good faith taken action under the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) by bringing proceedings, giving evidence or information in relation to proceedings, or making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation).
6. Birkbeck College Students' Union regards discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation, as described above, as serious misconduct. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate measures will be brought against the person who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person.

### **Responsibility, Implementation, and Communication**

7. The following responsibilities will apply:
  - The Board of Trustees of Birkbeck College Students' Union is responsible for ensuring that this EDI Policy is enforced and that any breaches are considered and dealt with appropriately.
  - An independent member of the Board will be appointed as the "EDI Champion" and is responsible for owning the EDI Policy, for updating the policy as legislation and social norms change, and for raising awareness of the EDI Policy inside Birkbeck College Students' Union.
  - All staff, officers, volunteers, executive and non-executive Board members of Birkbeck College Students' Union have the responsibility to respect, follow and promote the spirit and intention of this EDI Policy.
8. Birkbeck College Students' Union reserves the right to pursue positive action<sup>2</sup> - we are working to improve the representation of under-represented groups in the organisation.

---

<sup>2</sup> As allowed under the UK Equality Act 2010.

9. This EDI Policy will be implemented immediately and the following actions will be taken:

- Birkbeck College Students' Union will regularly review its employment practices to ensure continuing compliance with relevant legislation, and where possible good practice. All job advertisements produced or supported by Birkbeck College Students' Union will contain the following policy statement:

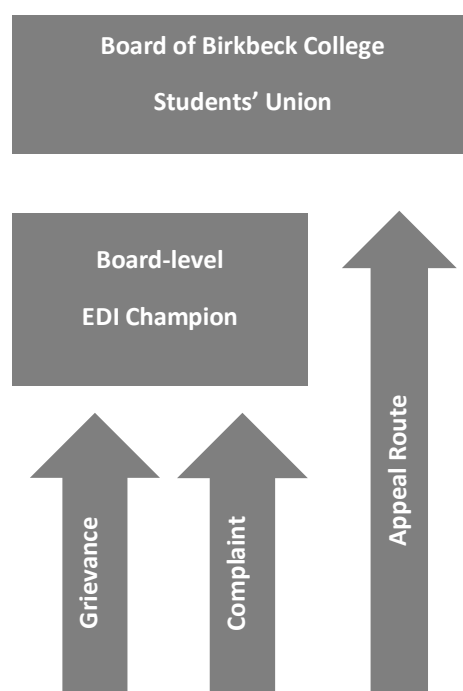
*Birkbeck College Students' Union is committed to the principle of equality of opportunity and is committed to ensuring that no person or persons are unlawfully discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation, as protected under the UK Equality Act 2010. Birkbeck College Students' Union are voluntarily committed to championing neurodiversity and socio-economic diversity.*

- No applicant for any role (including job applicants, consultant advisers, and suppliers) will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job, or which constitute unlawful discrimination.
- Birkbeck College Students' Union staff, officers and volunteers will be required to abide by this EDI Policy and model its commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. They are required to attend the annual EDI training and related activities provided by Birkbeck College Students' Union. Birkbeck Students' Union staff, officers and volunteers are expected to uphold these values in all student spaces, including online, to ensure an inclusive environment for students.
- Contractors, clients, consultants, and customers to Birkbeck College Students' Union will be required to abide by this EDI Policy and it will be referred to in any service level agreements or contracts issued by Birkbeck College Students' Union.

### Grievance and Complaints Procedure

10. To safeguard individual rights under this EDI Policy, any person who believes that they have suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this EDI Policy may raise the matter through the appropriate procedure:

- **Grievance Procedure for Students' Union staff, officers and volunteers:** speak to, or write to, the Board-level EDI Champion explaining the behaviour. They will protect your identity and the information that you share with them, and they will listen to you and discuss the options.
- **Complaints Procedure for those who are not employees and Students' Union members:** speak to, or write to, the Board-level EDI Champion naming the person(s) being complained about, what the work relationship is, details of the incident(s), whether anyone else observed the incident(s). They will protect your identity and the information that you share with them, and they will listen to you and discuss the options.



11. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any Birkbeck College Students' Union staff, officers or volunteers who violate this EDI Policy. An individual raising a grievance will not be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.
12. The final point of appeal relating to this policy is the Board of Birkbeck College Students' Union or a panel designated by the Board for that purpose.