



Mirpur University of Science & Technology (MUST) Mirpur AJ&K

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Purpose

Mirpur University of Science & Technology (MUST) values diverse identities and experiences, and honors diversity as an important aspect of human diversity, staying firm with our unwavering dedication to foster an inclusive culture that ensures equal opportunities for everyone. The policy serves as a comprehensive guide for upholding inclusive interactions, behaviors, and decision-making processes.

Scope

The policy applies to all stakeholders of the University community, including but not limited to faculty, staff, students, volunteers and alumni. The policy applies to all aspects of University activities, including *but not limited to* research, teaching, service, and administration.

Definitions

The following definitions are applicable in the context of this policy:

Equity refers to fairness and just treatment of every individual, irrespective of their characteristics or backgrounds. It means recognizing and addressing systemic barriers and biases that hinder certain groups from accessing opportunities, resources, and benefits on an equal basis

Diversity recognizes and values the differences and unique characteristics of individuals, including but not limited to their race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, and cultural backgrounds. Embracing diversity enriches and enhances the community experience for all stakeholders involved.

Inclusion involves creating an environment that welcomes, respects, and values diverse perspectives and experiences. It ensures active engagement, listening, and involvement of all individuals in decision-making processes, fostering a sense of belonging, empowerment, and ensuring that every voice is valued and included.

Introduction

At MUST, we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and diverse environment that upholds the principles of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. This policy serves as a foundation for our commitment to creating an environment that celebrates diversity and promotes inclusivity. We believe in providing equal opportunities and treating all members of our university community with dignity and respect, regardless of their attributes, the protected attributes are the same as listed in the Anti-Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy;

- race, nationality or ethnic origin,
- ethnicity
- religion & beliefs,
- gender,
- disabilities,
- age,
- family status,
- marriage
- pregnancy & maternity
- socio-economic status,
- refugee and asylum seekers
- association with, or relation to, a person identified on the basis of any of the above attributes
- and other characteristics that may arise in future

Policy Statement

To ensure an equal and just learning environment for our faculty, staff, and students, we adhere to the following principles, which also encompass the addition of stakeholders from the broader community.

- The University will utilize all reasonable means to actively promote an atmosphere in which the diversity of its staff, students, and wider community members is valued as well as where people can reach their full potential without fear of discrimination, bullying, or harassment, either on the basis of an attribute protected under anti-discrimination legislation or some other attribute irrelevant to their role within the University community.
- The Standing Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee will be established to directly work with students and staff to ensure the adherence to the policy and equitable practices across the University. The committee will dedicatedly work towards redressing discrimination faced by certain groups of people for a long-term and/or systemic disadvantage by implementing appropriate and reasonable strategies to assure equitable

access and participation in all aspects of university life for its staff, current and prospective students, and other members of the university community.

- The equality, diversity and inclusion officer will be appointed to dedicatedly plan, implement, monitor and report on the programs and initiatives related to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- The university will provide education and training programs to enhance awareness, understanding, and skills related to equality, diversity, and inclusion. These programs will be designed for all members of the university community, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators.
- The university will promote the development and implementation of inclusive curricula that reflect diverse perspectives and cultures
- The university will encourage faculty to incorporate diverse materials, examples, and perspectives into their teaching
- The university will adopt fair and inclusive recruitment and retention practices to attract a diverse pool of candidates. This includes actively seeking candidates from underrepresented groups, reviewing and revising job descriptions and qualifications to reduce bias, and implementing strategies to mitigate potential bias in the selection process.
- The University has a zero tolerance policy for discrimination, bullying, harassment, and vilification and exhibits a legal and moral obligation to safeguard the faculty, students, staff and all associated parties mentioned in the Policy's from such behaviors or practices.

Complaint Lodging Procedure for Non-Compliance

In case of violation of the policy within the university premises, the University is liable to take strict action against such individuals. In order to register complaints and/or any related issue pertaining to the case(s) of discrimination, bullying and harassment, the university has a dedicated complaints management system defined within the **Complaint/Grievances Policy**. Complaints must be lodged formally, in writing, by the individual making the complaint. The complaint should include the complainant's full name, their role or position within University and contact details. The complaints can be submitted by any of the following secure and dedicated complaint methods as illustrated in **Complaint/Grievances Policy** that directly reach out to a member of the Grievance/Complaint Committee responsible for the ethical compliance of the University.

Via email at:

complain.employee@must.edu.pk - (For Employees of MUST University)

complain.students@must.edu.pk - (For Students of MUST University)

Record Keeping

Reports on all complaints and investigations will be maintained through the dedicated, secure mechanism of the Office of the Registrar for a duration of three years. All concerns expressed and responses to complaints will be documented.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and to make necessary updates as required.

Approval and Amendment

This policy is approved by the academic council. Amendments to this policy can only be made with the approval of the academic council.

Document Control

This document is controlled by MUST's administrative body. The latest version of the document will always be available from University's official website or upon request.