

UUSU Good Relations Policy

Good relations within the context of UUSU, means promoting better relationships between people from different political, religious and racial backgrounds, tackling racism and promoting cultural diversity and inclusion.

As a forward-looking organisation, created to support and represent our members, we shall strive to ensure that preference is not given to, or advantage withheld, from any member of the Union. UUSU strives to create good relations on campus and to tackle inequality and promote the benefits of diversity within UUSU, Ulster University and wider society.

This Policy applies to all Students' Union members, activities, societies and services. It focuses particularly on the good relations characteristics of race, religion and political opinion. It encompasses areas including political expression, culture, language and dress code. The policy is supported by the Political Expression Framework and the UU Dress Code Policy.

Definitions

By good relations we *mean 'the growth of relationships and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms'* Equality Commission Northern Ireland.

An effective Good Relations policy is one whereby every person knows, accepts and embodies good relations as a core value in all of their interactions at the University. It aims to maximize the potential of students and encourages them to function in a comfortable environment. Good Relations policies are designed to foster and encourage healthy debate and exchange while excluding violence or threat of any kind. The aim of our policy is to ensure that student culture in Ulster University is vibrant, open and tolerant based on our principles of acknowledging and welcoming diversity, promoting equality of opportunity and access and ensuring that students of all backgrounds are welcome and free from intimidation or threat. The policy will normally be self-regulating every e.g The student union officers will evaluate the policy and make amendments or updates which they deem fit for the policy, these amendments and updates will then be passed by council.

The Equality Duty - Section 75 (1) requires the University, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependents and persons without.

Diversity describes the range of visible and non-visible differences that exist between people. Managing diversity harnesses these differences to create a productive environment in which everybody feels valued, where talents are fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met (Kandola and Fullerton 1998).

Inclusion in equal opportunities terms is about making every member of a community feel that they are not prevented from taking part in any activity, applying for any job, applying to become a student in any Higher Education Institution, because of any personal characteristic relating to their race or

ethnicity, gender, disability status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or socio-economic group. Policies and practices that are open, fair, transparent and equitable encourage inclusion.

Aims of UUSU in terms of Good Relations:

- To ensure that students of different racial groups, culture, gender, political and religious belief are welcomed and supported in an environment in which they are free to participate fully, safely and without fear, whilst respecting the diversity of opinion and the rights of others;
- To make a positive contribution for an inclusive, tolerant and open environment for all studying at Ulster University;
- To create opportunities for political leadership for those who are underrepresented within Ulster University, and wider society;
- To foster and encourage healthy debate and exchange while excluding violence or threat of any kind;
- To ensure that student culture in Ulster University is vibrant, open and tolerant based on our principles of acknowledging and welcoming diversity, promoting equality of opportunity and access and ensuring that students of all backgrounds are welcome and free from intimidation or threat.

Implementation of these Aims:

- Adoption of the Good Relations policy, and promotion of such to all students;
- Ensuring all events and services are delivered in the spirit of this policy;
- Proactively promoting diversity and inclusion through further policies and practice, for example UUSU Diversity Networks and seats for underrepresented groups on Student Council.

Responsibility for Implementation:

The President of UUSU will be responsible for reviewing this policy, with all student officers being responsible for displaying the values and promoting inclusion.

All members of UUSU are responsible for upholding these values and ensuring their behaviours do not discriminate against others.

Relevant Policies and Legislation

This policy co-exists with University and UUSU policies, as well as legislation:

Legislation:

- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998);
- The Race Relations (NI) Order (1997);
- Sex Discrimination (NI) Order (1976);
- The Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998;
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003;
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006;
- Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970;
- Human Rights legislation as it applies in Northern Ireland; (and all their amendments)

Ulster University & UUSU Policies:

- Ulster University's Equality Scheme which can be accessed via the below link:

www.ulster.ac.uk/aboutus/governance/equality-diversity/equality-scheme

This includes a high-level action plan which maps out how the University and the Students' Union will fulfil this policy commitment within the context of Northern Ireland.

- UUSU Equal Opportunities Policy: [Link to this]
- UU Bullying & Harassment (Dignity at Work) Policy and Procedures;
- The Student Charter;
- The Students' Union Articles Of Association
- The Student Handbook

Complaints

Where the complaint involves the President, please contact the Chief Executive Officer of UUSU – d.longstaff@ulster.ac.uk