Harassment and Discrimination Policy

The following statement is intended to provide a summary of the University’s procedures with regard to all forms of harassment and discrimination. (Regulations concerning Personal Conduct and the Code of Student Discipline also refer to conduct and behaviour.)

Agreed disciplinary procedures exist which cover the behaviour and actions of all grades of staff and all types of student, and will be invoked as necessary.

Although most complaints will be dealt with satisfactorily through the University’s own internal procedures, individuals are at liberty to seek legal advice about any incident which appears to contravene the provisions of The Equality Act 2010. It is strongly recommended, however, that advice is taken from an appropriate University official before such action is taken.

The University’s Equal Opportunities Statement is as follows:

The University of Leicester will positively promote equality of opportunity for all current and potential students, staff and its other stakeholders. It will not discriminate unfairly on the basis of sex, pregnancy and maternity, gender, gender reassignment, disability, race, ethnic or national origin, age, sexual orientation, socio economic background, religion and belief, political beliefs, family circumstances including marriage and civil partnership and trade union membership.

The above list of characteristics are known as protected characteristics.

The following definitions are only intended to provide broad guidelines:

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature

Treating a person less favourably than another person because they either submitted to, or did not submit to, sexual harassment or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment.

Harassment can include vexatious or offensive oral or written comments and can extend to physical abuse.

Discrimination occurs when an individual or groups of individuals on the grounds of gender are treated less favourably than others would be treated, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics as outlined in the University’s Equal Opportunities Statement (above).

Complaints procedures

Note: A formal complaint can be made without prior recourse to the informal procedures.

Informal procedures

a) If possible, the offender should be asked to discontinue the activity which has caused distress.

b) If a direct approach is not possible, or has had no effect, the offence can be referred to one or more of the following:

i) Personal Tutor

ii) Academic Affairs Officer or Welfare and International Officer of the Students’ Union

iii) Students’ Union Part-Time Student Officers or Association Presidents

iv) Student Welfare Service

v) Counselling Service

vi) Freemen’s Common Health Centre

vii) Chaplain

viii) Warden of Accommodation

ix) Nightline

x) Departmental Equality Officers

c) The following senior officials can also be consulted on an informal basis:

i) Heads of Departments

ii) Academic Registrar

iii) Director of Human Resources

Any advisor or official can be asked to mediate informally between the complainant and the offender.

Records and anonymity: With the consent of the complainant, advisors may keep brief records of reported incidents for monitoring purposes. Complainants can ask to remain anonymous, but in these circumstances the complaint cannot of itself give rise to any disciplinary action.

Formal Procedures

A formal complaint should be made utilising the student complaints procedure.