

## STUDENT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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### DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Author	Approved by	Date
1.0	Learning and Teaching Committee	Senate	29.04.2022

## 1. PURPOSE

BUV is committed to the principles of equal opportunity and diversity in the selection and education of its students. This policy provides the framework to ensure that BUV is guided by the principles of equal opportunity, respect and inclusion.

## 2. SCOPE

All members of the BUV community have a responsibility to contribute to the achievement of an equitable and diverse learning environment. This policy applies to all undergraduate students and prospective students who study programmes of Staffordshire University and British University Vietnam, and is enacted by all BUV staff, contractors, visitors or individuals engaged in official relations with BUV.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Diversity	Ways in which people and groups of people are both alike and different.
Equal opportunity	Refers to students, and prospective students, having equal access to opportunities in to study at BUV.
Equity	The creation of opportunities for equal access and success in Australian higher education among historically underrepresented student populations.
Special measures	Acts which BUV can take to enable substantive equality for individuals who belong to groups which have experienced past disadvantage, because of laws and rules, stereotypes and attitudes. Special measures aim to redress past disadvantage and improve outcomes and access to education for people from these groups. Anti-discrimination legislation enables BUV to implement special measures for specific groups.
Unlawful discrimination	Occurs when a person, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group based on characteristics as determined by Federal and state legislation. Unlawful discrimination can be direct or indirect.

Victimisation	The less favourable treatment of a person or persons for their participation in making, supporting or resolving a complaint of discrimination, harassment or vilification, whether that participation was actual, intended or presumed. This includes a person or persons who have agreed to be witnesses in relation to a complaint.
Vilification	A public act that could incite others to hate, have serious contempt for, or severely ridicule a person or a group of people because based on certain characteristics as determined by legislation.

#### **4. STUDENT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FRAMEWORK**

##### **a. Equality statement**

BUV does not discriminate against students based on age, race, colour, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status or physical or intellectual disability in the recruitment of students or staff or the implementation of its policies, procedures and activities.

BUV is committed to ensuring the integration of the principles of equal opportunity for all students in the university policies, procedures, decisions and operations. University activities are underpinned by the principles that:

- Students have the right to be treated fairly and equitably;
- There is equitable access to education for students;
- Students are entitled to a study environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying or other adverse and inappropriate behaviours;
- Diversity is respected and appreciated as contributing to the richness of the teaching and learning environment;
- An inclusive and flexible environment, including the implementation of special measures when required, provides the best outcomes for the varied needs of the College’s diverse student community;
- Equal opportunity does not mean treating everyone in the same way and in order to redress the past disadvantages of particular groups, special measures are needed to improve employment and educational opportunities for people from these

groups. These groups include women, people with a disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and

- Students have the right to raise complaints in good faith under BUV's complaints procedure without fear of retaliation or victimisation.

**b. Procedures and Implementation**

BUV will promote equal opportunity by:

- Endeavouring to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the learning environment is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification, victimisation, bullying or other adverse and inappropriate behaviours.
- Implementing inclusive policies, practices and programs in all its activities and services to take account of the needs of the diverse University community.
- Developing and implementing programs and special measures to improve access, participation, retention and success of students from underrepresented equity target groups.
- Monitoring and reporting on BUV's diversity performance against identified University priorities.
- Implementing training and awareness-raising strategies to ensure that all staff understands their obligations with respect to student equity.
- Providing an effective procedure for complaints based on the principles of natural justice.

**c. Complaints:**

Any complaints by students about breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with BUV Appeal Policy document.

## **5. STUDENT DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK**

**a. Monitoring goals, policy, procedures, and processes**

BUV will review all policies and practices in the University for biases and barriers to inclusion, as consistent with University bylaws, rules, and policies; and recognition of diversity in institutional decision making, policy development, planning, institutional goals and, working with the Rules, Policies, and Credentials Committee, composition of committees. It will assess issues of diversity as they affect faculty, staff and students and will make recommendations to the Dean annually and as necessary.

BUV will:

- Actively recruit and retain a diverse faculty, staff and student body that includes minorities, women and persons with disabilities.
- Develop and monitor policies that support diversity.
- Support regular training for faculty and staff in issues of diversity.
- Establish curricula that reflect inclusion and diversity.

**b. Recruiting and retaining diversity among students**

Efforts must be continually made to identify and eliminate barriers within the University that prevent students from applying or being admitted to programs for which they are qualified.

- Establish Diversity-Sensitive Recruitment: Particular attention should be given to recruiting efforts to minority students. Special effort should be made to follow up on minority student applications, particularly if the application was incomplete and its review would be dependent on its completion. Materials distributed at conferences and college fairs should demonstrate and reflect a value for diversity. Provide information to students about opportunities to finance their degree with resources of which they may not be aware.
- Materials. Develop print materials for distribution at conferences and college fairs and sent out in mailings that demonstrate and reflect the University's value in having a diverse student body. The web-site of the school must also be updated periodically to reflect the University's value for diversity. Care must be taken to ensure that processes are not exclusionary. Materials must reflect the information and resources that support potential students from underrepresented minority groups and students with disabilities. Issues of concern among students include financial aid/resources, academic resources and support, and quality of intellectual life.
- Establish Diversity-Sensitive Selection. Ensure a selection process that is free from bias, and an admission process that is based only on the selection of students who are qualified. Particularly monitor the exclusion of minorities and other underrepresented groups.
- Monitor the Selection Process. The admissions committee should establish procedures for selection that require applications to be read by more than one

person so as to minimize the possibility that qualified candidates may be overlooked. The selection of the candidate must be based on clearly articulated performance criteria and clear guidelines. Establish a norm where a diverse student body is a desired attribute. The committee chair should review data related to offers and selections periodically to ensure that qualified candidates were not denied an equal opportunity to compete for a place.

- Create and Support Diverse Curriculum and Pedagogy. Provide curricula that include multicultural content through 1) inclusion of a variety of perspectives, 2) discussions of social contexts, including issues of equity and justice, and 3) activities that foster critical thinking and the development of self-awareness. Identify and minimize pedagogical and related barriers to student learning.
- Create a Diverse Climate. Create a campus of faculty and staff diverse in human, cultural, research, teaching and service characteristics. A diverse faculty often reflects a school's commitment to educational equity. Develop a community that values and advances a climate of inclusion, diversity, and equity for all individuals through education/training and programming. Develop campus partnerships and enhance knowledge of campus resources for a diverse student body. Create a campus that cares for each other and shares their talents and gifts. Provide information to students about University resources, offices and departments for support services.