

**EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY**

## EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

**Effat University**

**EU Policy #: SDG 0001**

**UC Decision: UC#7/17March.2024/2.3-4(1)**

**Revised:**

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### POLICY STATEMENT

Effat University is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in education, employment, and research. The university values diversity of thought and experience and believes that an inclusive and collaborative culture underpins research, teaching excellence and facilitates a positive student and staff experience.

All members of the university community are expected to understand and embrace the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion and are responsible for the implementation of such principles within their scope of influence and authority.

#### **Purpose**

This policy is in place to support the university community in bringing to life the principles of diversity, equality, human dignity, and reflecting them back in daily interactions and decisions of Effat University Community. It specifies the University's commitment to providing an accessible, equitable and inclusive learning and work environment for students, faculty, staff, and the University Community. It sets out the accountabilities and responsibilities for equity, diversity, and inclusion across the University and its Controlled Entities.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to all members of the university community, including students, researchers, post-doctoral fellows, staff, faculty, institutional leadership, members of governing bodies, all persons participating in university businesses or activities (e.g. visitor, service provider, contractor, volunteer).

#### **Responsible Party**

Office of the President

#### **Additional Authority**

University Committee for Handling Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

### POLICY & PROCEDURES

#### **Introduction**

The university believes equity, diversity, inclusion, and an environment that is free of any form of discrimination or harassment based upon a person's race, color, religion, gender, age, socio-economic status or ethnic origin brings about a sense of belonging and strengthens the community and enhances excellence, innovation, and creativity in all domains. It fully embraces the principles adopted in Islam where all men are equal.

Effat University pillars for the code of ethical conduct includes tolerance and moderation which endeavors to strike balance between modernity and heritage, integration and identity, organizational interests, and social expectation.

### A. University's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Principles

Effat University adopts the Islamic principle of Piety (تقوى Taqwa) as one of its eight pillars, Allah said:” And among people and moving creatures and grazing livestock are various colors similarly. Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving” – Verse 28, Surah Faater to create a culture that both values and benefits from equity, diversity and inclusion, staff and students are required to follow these principles in their interactions with each other and the broader community, whilst carrying out the activities (or related activities) of the University.

1. The University will provide equal opportunity in employment and education so that all staff and students could have the opportunity to fully participate in university life and will review the effectiveness of actions undertaken in relation to this principle.
2. The University will support staff and students to exercise their rights and responsibilities as members of the Effat University Community in relation to equity, diversity, and inclusion at EU.
3. All students, staff, and other members of the University community are expected to treat others with respect, and consideration of their dignity. Bullying, unlawful discrimination, or harassment are not acceptable behaviors and will not be tolerated.
4. All staff and students in positions of leadership and management must, with the support of their teams and for inclusive purposes, identify opportunities and take steps towards achieving the University's objectives for student and staff equity, diversity, and inclusion.
5. All staff and students, whenever possible and appropriate, must strive for their communications to be accessible to diverse groups, reflect the diversity of Effat University's Community, and use inclusive language so that it applies to all staff and students.
6. The University promotes clear and accountable policies and practices that reflect the University's commitment and action on equity, diversity, and inclusion to support the values of partnership; integrity, transparency and ethical decision making; and respect.

### B. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Priorities

The University's EDI priorities for students and staff are to:

1. Meet its legal obligations to provide equitable, inclusive, and accessible learning and work environments, including online, virtual, and physical environments.
2. Design institutional policies, procedures, processes, practices, and approaches that are equitable, inclusive, and meet diverse needs.
3. Provide reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of students and staff with a disability so that they could have the opportunity to meet inherent requirements.
4. Improve educational access, participation, and success for underrepresented or disadvantaged student groups via widening participation initiatives.
5. Provide staff with development, training, and career progression opportunities that are inclusive and accessible.
6. Ensure that curricula and teaching approaches and practices represent diverse knowledge and experiences.

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7. Ensure that research methodologies and practices are inclusive and consider diversity impacts and outcomes.
8. Take a preventative and responsive approach to addressing bullying, harassment, or discrimination; any instances of bullying, harassment, or discrimination will be addressed by running thorough and objective investigations and applying appropriate procedures to prevent such unacceptable actions.

### C. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Accountability and Responsibility

All members of the university community share the responsibility for creating a supportive and inclusive environment that is based on the Islamic principle of tolerance and moderation (Wasatya وسطية).

#### 1. The university community is accountable as follows:

- All staff, students and affiliates are responsible for fostering a culture that embraces equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging. This requires staff and students to be accountable for their actions and behaviors.
- All staff, students and affiliates must acknowledge and address the biases, underlying beliefs and values, assumptions, and stereotypes that inhibit opportunities in work and learning environments.
- All staff, students and affiliates must welcome, embrace, and foster positive, informed, and inclusive attitudes towards each other.
- All staff, students and affiliates must provide environments that are free of discrimination and harassment, and inclusive of all individuals.
- All staff, students and affiliates must ensure the inclusion of perspectives and voices of underrepresented groups in decision-making.
- All staff, students and affiliates engaged in developing University activities are responsible for ensuring that the activities are inclusive. This applies to the design and provision of curricula, teaching practices, and learning culture as well as co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

#### 2. College and Units are accountable to:

- Develop research, curriculum, and practices that support equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging and have a positive impact on the broader community.
- Critically review college/unit sanctioned documents, publications, and other works to ensure the use of inclusive and non-discriminatory language and images that reflect social and cultural diversity.
- Provide physical and virtual environments that are accessible, including but not limited to the equipment and resources within them.
- Create and sustain a welcoming environment in their college/unit that reflects social and cultural diversity through signage, art, ceremonial spaces, language, and inclusive cultural practices and protocols.

#### 3. Institutional Leadership are accountable as follows:

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- The University's Leadership Team is responsible and accountable for the progress of equity, diversity and inclusion strategies and the implementation of priority actions.
- The Provost (Academic Leader) is responsible for student and faculty equity, diversity and inclusion progress and actions, and the Vice-President for Development and Planning is responsible for staff equity, diversity and inclusion progress and actions.
- The University's Leadership Team must model the way for the university by demonstrating commitment and action toward a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive community.
- The University's Leadership Team must critically review institutional structures, systems, policies and procedures, and processes to address disadvantage and underrepresentation.
- The University's Leadership Team must critically review university sanctioned documents, publications, and other works to ensure the use of inclusive and non-discriminatory language and images that reflect social and cultural diversity.
- The University's Leadership Team must provide physical and virtual environments that are accessible, including but not limited to the equipment and resources within them.
- The University's Leadership Team must create and sustain a welcoming environment in common spaces that reflect social and cultural diversity through signage, art, ceremonial spaces, language, and inclusive cultural practices and protocols.

### D. Compliance

1. All faculty, staff and students including but not limited to: exchange students or faculty, international students, faculty and staff must adhere to the Islamic values of tolerance and moderation.
2. All faculty, staff and students should commit to Effat University Code of Ethical Conduct.
3. Demonstrating commitment and action toward a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive community requires reflection and active learning. As such, application of this policy will focus on providing the education, resources, and support to meet the accountabilities as outlined above.
4. Effat University and members of the university community are required to comply with all relevant legislation related to human rights and employment equity.
5. Formal complaints will be resolved through application of the appropriate university policy, regulations, guidelines, or collective agreements.

### E. Definitions

Word	Meaning
<b>Eight Pillars of Effat University Code of Conduct</b>	Effat chose eight fundamental pillars that constitute its code of ethical conduct and named them Tarbawyyat Effat (please refer to the appendix).
<b>Equity</b>	recognizing and responding to individual differences and needs when providing services, support, learning, and teaching within the reasonable measures provided to functioning individuals.

<b>Diversity</b>	The representation of people from different backgrounds, social groups, or identities. These may include gender, age, ethnicity, race, cultural background, socio-economic background, disability, religion.
<b>Inclusion</b>	The removal of any structural and cultural barriers to full participation and access, and empowering students and staff to use all information and resources available to them. An inclusive culture, learning and workplace environment requires continuous and mindful practice to ensure barriers that exclude are removed to enable individuals to feel valued and respected, to contribute, engage, and express themselves.
<b>Discrimination</b>	Is adverse treatment of an individual based on a protected characteristic, rather than individual merit.
<b>Harassment</b>	Harassment refers to aggressive pressure or intimidation that causes annoyance, distress, or emotional harm to someone. It can manifest in various forms, including repeated unwanted contacts, insults, threats, or offensive language.
<b>Accessibility</b>	Having equitable access for all individuals to participate and engage in the University learning and community environment. It includes, but is not limited to, enabling physical, digital, linguistic, cultural, technological, and socio-economic access to educational resources and spaces associated with learning.
<b>Affiliates</b>	Persons holding Honorary titles with the University, consultants and contractors, and volunteers working for the University.
<b>Equitable Participation</b>	Empowering individuals to participate by accommodating areas where they may lack equal access to resources, information and opportunity that enable them to participate in equal measure within the reasonable measures accepted legally at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
<b>Inherent Requirements</b>	For students: the essential activities, capacities and academic requirements that are necessary for a student to successfully achieve the core learning outcomes or for participation in a course, unit or university activity. For staff, inherent requirements are the ability to perform the essential elements of the person's job.
<b>Reasonable Adjustments</b>	These are adjustments which enable students or staff with disability to meet inherent requirements without unreasonable hardship to the University.
<b>Staff</b>	Staff means all persons employed by the University, including continuing, fixed term, and casual staff members.
<b>Students</b>	Students includes all those who have been admitted or are enrolled or auditing a course or unit of study or research provided by the University or an educational institution affiliated with the University which is approved by the University, including those who have completed a course or unit of study or research but for which the applicable award has not yet been given.

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<b>Exchange faculty</b>	Means those faculty employed by another University (national or international) who are visiting Effat University for a short period based on a collaborative exchange program under a cooperative agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding.
<b>Exchange students</b>	Means those students admitted or enrolled by another University (national or international) who attends Effat University for a short period based on a collaborative exchange program under a cooperative agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding.

### Related Documents:

1. Conflict of Interest Policy
2. Academic Honesty Policy
3. Academic Freedom Policy
4. Effat Code of Ethical Conduct
5. Students' Rights and Responsibilities
6. Students with Disabilities
7. Student Admission Policy
8. Scholarship and Financial Aid Policy
9. Student Concern and Grievance Policy