

Lingnan University

Equal Opportunities Policy

Preamble

1. The University is committed to equal opportunity in academic pursuit and employment, and hence to the elimination of any form of discrimination/harassment by members of the University community. The University fosters equal opportunities for all members of the University in accordance with Article 2, 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights', and the laws governing equal opportunities in Hong Kong, including the Sex Discrimination Ordinance (SDO), the Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO), the Family Status Discrimination Ordinance (FSDO) and the Race Discrimination Ordinance (RDO). Any form of discriminatory/harassing behavior against another person will not be tolerated by the University. If a case is known to occur, and if deemed appropriate, a formal disciplinary procedure may be invoked.

2. The University is committed to promoting equal opportunities awareness on campus through publicity activities, events, training workshops, seminars and informational talks to educate the University community. Adhering to these policies also benefits staff and students in terms of their contribution to the spirit of liberal arts education at Lingnan.

Forms of Discrimination

3. The definitions of the following forms of discrimination in the relevant legislation apply at this University:¹
 - Sex discrimination;
 - Sexual Harassment;
 - Disability discrimination and harassment;

¹ For details of the definitions of the various Ordinances, as well as definitions of the various forms of discrimination, please visit the website on Equal Opportunities Commission:

<http://www.eoc.org.hk/eoc/graphicsfolder/showcontent.aspx?content=our%20work-eo%20works>

- Marital status discrimination;
- Family status discrimination;
- Pregnancy discrimination;
- Harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation, and
- Racial Discrimination and harassment.

In practice, the University complies with the Ordinances stated in point 1 and deems it unlawful to discriminate, harass, or vilify any staff, student or person in the University on grounds of disability, sex, marital status, pregnancy, family status, and race in the following areas of activities:

- employment
- education
- provision of goods, services and facilities
- access to premises
- disposal or management of premises
- participation in clubs and sporting activities
- activities of the Government

Regulations and procedures on equal opportunities

4. The University requires all its members to take necessary steps in order to ensure that any employee, student of the University or any other person who has dealings with the University is not subject to discrimination/harassment. This applies to employment, admission, teaching and learning, assessment, hostel life, provision of goods and services, and other areas of activities at the University.
5. The University has the responsibility of ensuring fair and equitable treatment, and of eliminating offensive behavior from the University community. All members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with the spirit of this policy as well as the requirements of law. Staff members should work cooperatively with co-workers to create and maintain a positive work environment. This includes respecting the rights of others, supporting, and abiding by reasonable standards of conduct. These details of the University's policy on equal opportunities in employment are stipulated in point 14, Part F (Service Guidelines and

Regulation in employment) of the Staff Handbook. Students should also work towards a harmonious learning environment by respecting each other's rights to facilities, supporting each other, and abiding by reasonable standards of conduct.

6. The University also aims to build and maintain an accessible campus for all members of the University. A wide range of accessibility support and services are available for members of the University with special needs, in particular, it is the intention of the University to provide aid and support to staff and students with disabilities as far as possible. For admission to academic programmes, applicants with disabilities are invited to contact the Registry for information concerning existing facilities for disabled persons at the University. Newly admitted students are also encouraged to inform the University of their needs so that timely assistance may be provided. Other support and services, including counseling service, financial assistance and awards are available for students with special needs.
7. The University adopts a set of formal procedures for the investigation of discrimination/harassment complaints. Details are stipulated in "Mechanism and Procedures in the Handling of Discrimination Cases". The Procedures apply to all full-time or part-time staff and students in the University.
8. Sexual harassment is unlawful. The University has established a comprehensive policy and procedures for handling complaints concerning sexual harassment, including the definition and examples of sexual harassment, victimization and scope of the policy, etc. Details are stipulated in "Paper on the Issues of Sexual Harassment".
<http://www.ln.edu.hk/occbga/policies-and-guidelines/sh-paper>.
9. The committee/units concerned may devise practical guidelines on various areas of its operation for active pursuit of equal opportunity.
10. The University encourages the use of the informal resolution and/or mediation process as the initial step to resolve discrimination/harassment complaints. If informal mediation fails to resolve the complaints, or any parties involved in the case decide to stop the informal resolution, the complainant may pursue the case through mediation or formal investigation conducted by the respective committee/unit concerned.

Confidentiality

11. In the process of mediation/investigation every reasonable effort is made to protect the privacy of all parties involved and the confidentiality of all information and documents used in accordance with existing University policies and applicable laws. Any violation of the confidentiality shall be regarded as a serious breach of professional ethics, and be subject to appropriate sanction.

Conflict of interest

12. Any person who has an actual or potential conflict of interest in the complaint shall declare his/her interest or shall not take part in the process of mediation/investigation.

Victimization

13. The University prohibits victimization or retaliation of any kind against any members of the University who in good faith make an equal opportunity complaint or participate in the mediation/investigation of a case regardless of whether the allegation is substantiated. Disciplinary action may be taken against any staff who is found to have committed any action of victimization or retaliation.

Monitoring of the Policy and Procedures

14. The University Council may review the Equal Opportunities Policy and other related regulations and procedures from time to time as deemed appropriate. Consultation with appropriate groups and relevant stakeholders may be conducted if deemed necessary.

Enquiries

15. Members of the University with enquiries, complaints or requests for assistance on discrimination issues are invited to contact a number of offices they may think fit:
- (a) Responsible individuals and Heads of Departments/units.
 - (b) Human Resources Office, which is responsible to provide guidance regarding any resolution process (Tel: 2616-8962; E-mail: hro@LN.edu.hk).
 - (c) Director of Administration shall provide information and answer enquiries in relation to handling complaints concerning discrimination and sexual harassment (Tel: 2616-8752; Email: monicat@LN.edu.hk).
 - (d) Equal Opportunities Commission, which is responsible for overseeing the stipulation and implementation of Equal Opportunities policies in Hong Kong. (Tel: 2511-8211; website link: www.eoc.org.hk).