



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

ABRIDGED GENDER MAINSTREAMING POLICY

DEFINITIONS

Affirmative Action: A deliberate policy that gives special privileges to certain groups of people to compensate them for the inequalities and inequities that they have suffered in the past or continue to suffer due to inadequate access to resources and opportunities.

For example, the government of Kenya has adopted the policy of affirmative action in the admission of students to all public universities; therefore, female students and other special categories of students are admitted to public universities with one point lower than other applicants. These groups must meet minimum qualifications. Affirmative action is a temporary special measure that should be implemented together with other interventions and discontinued after an acceptable level of parity has been achieved.

Gender: Socially constructed roles, responsibilities and relations between men and women, as well as boys and girls and not the biologically different categories of men and women.

Gender roles and relations, are learned through the life-long process of socialization, vary between and within countries and cultures, are dynamic and therefore change across time and space.

Gender Equality: Equal opportunities for men and women, boys and girls in access to and control over resources, as well as equality of voice and rights.

Gender Equity: The principle of fairness and justice in the distribution of resources and access to opportunities between men and women, boys and girls.

Gender Mainstreaming: Consistent integration of gender concerns into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans, programmes, activities and projects at all levels.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome acts of a sexual nature that cause discomfort to the targeted person. These include words, persistent request for sexual favours, gestures, touch, suggestions, coerced sexual intercourse and rape.

1. Policy Statement

The University's overall aim is to create and sustain a fair and just academic environment where men and women have equal opportunities, voice, rights and access to resources, so that persons of both genders can realize their full potential and contribution within a community of scholars with a culture of mutual respect.

2. Code of Practice at the University

To fulfill the spirit of the Gender Mainstreaming Policy, the University management has committed to the following in various aspects:

2.1 Decision making organs

The University will:

- i. Ensure gender equality in its organs and committees at all levels.
- ii. Ensure that the number of women in senior management positions increases until gender equality is achieved.
- iii. Use affirmative action as a strategy to achieve gender parity for appointive and elective positions at all levels.
- iv. Apply the principles of gender equality to leadership positions in University-sponsored student organizations.

2.2 Recruitment, Training and Promotion

The University will:

- i. Use a competitive recruitment process at all levels in combination with an affirmative action strategy.
- ii. Ensure a gender-balanced pool of applicants for every position.
- iii. Re-establish training programmes for both academic and non-academic staff and ensure that men and women have equal opportunities to participate in these.
- iv. Use affirmative action to hire into positions where one gender is under-represented.
- v. Provide support in the form of scholarships, study leave, and other incentives to enable female academic staff members to complete postgraduate studies.

2.3 Student admissions

The University will:

- i. Increase female enrolment in undergraduate programmes where there is extreme gender disparity by lowering the cluster cut-off points.
- ii. Support visits to high schools by students and academic staff to encourage more gender-balanced enrolments.
- iii. Use affirmative action to ensure improved gender-balance in programmes where it is currently lacking.
- iv. Encourage the development of mentoring programmes for both undergraduate and postgraduate students.
- v. Monitor enrolment statistics in all programmes annually to ensure gender balance is maintained or improved.

2.4 Gender Sensitive Curriculum

The University will:

- i. Ensure that curricula design and development consider gender issues in content and

delivery.

- ii. Ensure that curricula provide positive academic role models to both male and female students.
- iii. Ensure that all students are exposed to theories and concepts that enable them to understand gender and its implications for Kenyan society.

2.5 Working and Learning Environment

The University will:

- i. Ensure that all campus buildings have adequate and appropriate provision of male and female toilet facilities.
- ii. Ensure that all campus facilities, including office buildings, lecture halls and libraries, are clean and properly maintained.
- iii. Ensure adequate accommodation and recreational facilities for male and female students.
- iv. Ensure adequate office space for male and female lecturers.
- v. Ensure that multi-storey buildings have working lifts.
- vi. Provide transport and duty houses for staff who must work at night.
- vii. Strengthen security systems throughout the University.

2.6 Role models

The University will:

- i. Present positive female role models in all University-sponsored activities.
- ii. Undertake activities designed to raise the profile of female scholars and other professionals.
- iii. Encourage gender sensitivity in male students and staff by presenting male role models who demonstrate sensitivity in their language and behaviour.

2.7 Student Organizations and Co-curricular Activities

The University will:

- i. Ensure that UNSA and other student elections are free, fair, peaceful and gender responsive.
- ii. Give greater budgetary support to WOSWA and facilitate its elevation to a higher profile.
- iii. Ensure that its affirmative action policy applies to all University-sponsored student organizations.

2.8 University Staff Awards

The University will:

- i. Design a system of staff performance awards that offers both women and men equal opportunities to be rewarded.
- ii. Group long-service awards into categories that will assure balanced gender representation.

2.9 Examinations and Coursework

The University will:

- i. Make places available on all campuses where all students can study in safety, security, and without fear of sexual harassment.
- ii. Protect students against victimization if they report sexual offences or refuse the advances of a lecturer.
- iii. Provide and enforce clear guidelines on student-lecturer relationships.
- iv. Develop and enforce clear guidelines for the acceptable use of academic and administrative offices.
- v. Ensure that students taking examinations are properly and positively identified.

- vi. Make available scholarships that target excellent female students.
- vii. Ensure that no lecturer marks the examinations of his/her spouse, child, or close relative.

2.10 Gender Violence

The University will:

- i. Develop and enforce University rules aimed at protecting students and staff from sexual harassment. These will cover matters such as student-staff interactions, manner of dressing, organization of dining and library facilities, use of gender-sensitive language.
- ii. Establish sexual harassment centres and/or counselling services to respond to and deal promptly and effectively with sexual harassment cases.
- iii. Ensure that all reports or records on allegations or complaints of sexual harassment are treated with confidentiality.
- iv. Strictly enforce rules designed to protect students from harassment or violence in the University halls of residence, especially the prohibition of cohabitation and regulations pertaining to visiting hours.
- v. Treat rape and other sexual offences as indicated in the Sexual Offences Act as crimes that will lead to automatic expulsion or dismissal. In such cases the University will report the offence to the police.

2.11 Staff and Student Welfare

The University will:

- i. Provide regular communication to all members of staff concerning the medical facilities that are available to them, their spouses and their children.
- ii. Establish a welfare unit for staff, which includes welfare and counselling services.
- iii. Increase the number and improve the quality of student halls of residence.
- iv. Set up residential quarters for married students.
- v. Provide family planning services to all students.
- vi. Support pregnant students by granting them a maximum of one-year maternity leave and, where necessary, assisting them to get appropriate accommodation.
- vii. Establish affordable day-care facilities for babies of students and members of staff.
- viii. Provide housing and/or transport for staff required to work until late at night.
- ix. Diversify recreational facilities and activities to cater for the different needs of male and female students and staff.
- x. Recruit staff for sports and games department based on gender equality.
- xi. Establish campus-based fitness centres for staff.
- xii. Locate recreational facilities so that they are equally accessible to male and female students.
- xiii. Provide transport at a fee for students attending evening classes or using the library to convenient points from which they can safely get their transport.

3. Policy Implementation Mechanisms

1. The University of Nairobi has established a Gender Mainstreaming Division within the Vice-Chancellor's office.
2. Each Faculty has a Gender Mainstreaming Committee to interpret and domesticate the objectives of the policy.
3. Each Campus should have a gender focal point or unit with a full-time staff in charge, assisted by other part-time staff such as students on work-study programmes.
4. The complaint procedures relating to all forms of gender-based violations should be based on the underlying principles of confidentiality, protection of whistle blowers, user friendliness and speedy action.