

KUMASI TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY



GENDER EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

July, 2024

Table of Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION 1

2.0 PURPOSE3

3.0 PRINCIPLES.....3

4.0 RELATED KSTU POLICIES4

5.0 SCOPE OF THE POLICY4

6.0 RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POLICY..... 7

7.0 BREACHES OF THIS POLICY 10

8.0 DEFINITIONS 11

REFERENCES..... 13

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Gender Equality and Diversity Policy of Kumasi Technical University (KsTU) seeks to build a diverse workforce and to ensure that prospective employees and employees are not discriminated against on the grounds of age, gender, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity, family responsibilities, stature, political beliefs and/or affiliation, race, ethnicity, religion, and disability. KsTU shall contribute to empowerment, self-sufficiency, fair treatment, and continuous professional development, including contributing towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (Goals 5, 8, 10, 16 and 17).

The policy aims at contributing to the fight against discrimination and unequal employment opportunities based on gender, age, religion, belief, nationality, culture or various visible and non-visible factors that form a person's identity. By strengthening the role and participation of each staff member, KsTU shall promote the visibility and growth of each individual in and outside the University. The policy shall employ three (3) pillars to protect, include and empower all staff. The pillars are - Non-discrimination, Non-Harassment and Non-Violence; Gender equality; and Diversity and Inclusion.

(i) Non-discrimination, Non-Harassment and Non-Violence

KsTU shall be committed to detecting, averting and eradicating any negative impact on human rights in the university. The University shall equally build a positive, impartial and safe environment devoid of discrimination, segregation and violence (sexual, psychological, physical, emotional among others).

(ii) Gender Equality

KsTU shall promote gender equality by empowering all members of staff whose development are held back by stereotypes. The University shall seek to provide gender balance within all boards and committees, so that views and opinions of all staff are represented. The University shall ensure that boards and committees are equitably represented gender wise.

The University shall ensure gender parity by generating equal opportunities for professional growth and access to leadership and management positions.

iii. Diversity and Inclusion

The University shall, in all aspects, be committed to an inclusive environment that promotes visibility of all staff and facilitates freedom of expression without prejudice.

KsTU shall respect diversity and individuality of each person, as well as their need for confidentiality and/or privacy.

The Policy guarantees that:

- i. All staff of KsTU shall be treated fairly and with respect to ensure equality of opportunities and access to resources and services.
- ii. All staff shall be entitled to a workplace free from harassment and discrimination.
- iii. All staff shall have the opportunity to contribute and achieve their full potential.

2.0 PURPOSE

The University's Gender Equality and Diversity Policy sets out what the University aims to achieve in terms of gender equality and diversity. The policy has the potential to ensure satisfactory and optimum work output without any biases. The policy communicates official commitment of KsTU to a workplace where all members of staff have a sense of belonging and are valued for their unique professional skills. KsTU shall encourage a workplace culture that is free from prejudice and discrimination; where decisions of boards and committees affecting staff are based on the individual's own merit.

The purpose of this Policy is to reinforce KsTU's commitment to ensuring that all staff are fairly treated and given equal opportunities. The Policy further aims to ensure that all staff participate reasonably in all activities and can enjoy their rights as unique individuals.

This Policy reiterates the commitment of KsTU to:

- i. draw on the rich range of experiences, capacities, and aspirations of all staff.
- ii. be accountable to staff by ensuring that their needs, perspectives, and priorities are considered without bias and discrimination.

3.0 PRINCIPLES

The principles of the Gender Equality and Diversity Policy are:

- i. To develop and promote a culture of diversity and equality throughout the university.

- ii. To develop and promote a culture of fairness, integrity, and dignity.
- iii. To ensure that both men and women are equally respected and valued; each for their uniqueness.

4.0 RELATED KSTU POLICIES

The University Statutes and Ethics Policy address some aspects of gender related issues.

5.0 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The Gender Equality and Diversity Policy shall apply to prospective employees and to all staff of KsTU, whether full time, part time, temporary or permanent and wherever they are located within KsTU network of campuses. The policy shall require:

- i. continuous and meaningful engagement with all staff
- ii. understanding individual needs and challenges
- iii. building on individual capacities
- iv. ensuring safety, support, and interventions that consider individual perspectives and priorities.

The policy shall cover:

- e. Recruitment, selection and promotion
- f. Terms and conditions of employment
- g. Professional development
- h. Safe working environment

- i. Leadership, management and accountability
- j. Grievances and disciplinary action

a) Recruitment, Selection and Promotion

KsTU shall advertise all open positions and shall state clearly that applications from all qualified persons are welcomed. The advertisement for a vacancy and job description shall clearly state the knowledge, experience and skill required of the applicant. Selection for employment shall be based on relevant criteria, experience, aptitude and ability, devoid of biases. Selection of qualified candidate shall always be carried out by more than one person and never by a single-sex panel.

b) Terms and Conditions of Employment

KsTU shall apply the scheme of service and other relevant documents approved by Academic Board and/or Governing Council and Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) in executing and implementing the terms and conditions of employment.

c) Professional Development

The performance management processes of KsTU shall identify and support the professional development needs, opportunities, and career development goals of all staff. These processes shall be without discrimination, favoritism and/or biases. The University shall provide access to training and development opportunities to all staff. All employees will be encouraged to develop their full potential.

d) Safe Working Environment

KsTU shall build a positive, fair and safe environment with zero tolerance for discrimination, segregation and violence (sexual, psychological, physical or emotional) where staff will feel supported both in their professional and personal development within and beyond their multiple identities. The working, teaching and learning environment in all KsTU campuses shall be safe for all staff and shall ensure dignity both in the University and society at large. KsTU shall outlaw all forms of bullying, harassment and discrimination, based on gender, age, stature, religion, race, ethnicity and disability. The University shall neither tolerate nor entertain any form of gender-based violence.

e) Leadership, Management and Accountability

KsTU aims for diversity in its senior management and governance structures. There shall be a reasonable representation of both genders on all boards and committees of the University.

KsTU shall seek to create the necessary conditions that will encourage and respect diversity and ensure dignity amongst all staff.

A statement indicating the support of the University for Gender Equality and Diversity Policy shall be published and made available through means appropriate and accessible to all staff along with the policy.

f) Grievances and Disciplinary Action

The University shall ensure that grievance and disciplinary procedures are carried out fairly and uniformly for all staff, whether they result in the giving of verbal or written warnings,

suspension, dismissal or any other disciplinary action.

In cases where the application of the policy conflicts with national legislation, the legislation shall take precedence.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POLICY

- A. The Academic Board of KSTU shall have oversight responsibility for the effective implementation and operation of this policy.
- i. The Board shall also ensure compliance with the relevant statutory provisions prohibiting discrimination.
 - ii. The Board shall delegate to the Vice-Chancellor the day-to-day responsibility for implementing the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review.
 - iii. The Registrar shall have the responsibility for ensuring that all procedures support the objectives of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair and/or unlawful discrimination. The Registrar shall be responsible for monitoring the policy and any complaints received.
 - iv. Deans, Directors and Heads of Department/Units shall be responsible for setting appropriate standards of behaviour, eliminating discrimination, providing equality of opportunity within the University staff; and for promoting a culture of tolerance and respect.
 - v. Staff of the University shall be responsible for treating others with dignity and respect.

- B. Academic Board, in ensuring the strategic implementation of the policy shall guarantee:
- i. That new staff of both genders feel welcome and encourage them to interact and solve problems using the unique talents and experiences from their backgrounds.
 - ii. That any reported incident of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment are fully investigated and acted upon.
 - iii. That staff of both genders shall grow and excel by encouraging them to solve problems, come up with new ideas and develop new skills.
- C. The Academic Board shall be responsible for ensuring gender equality and diversity in the University by following these guidelines:
- i. KsTU shall be an equal opportunity employer. By committing not to discriminate against prospective employees, KsTU shall ensure fairness in applying employment practices and procedures without bias.
 - ii. Awareness shall be raised throughout the University on the importance of engaging all staff in the decision-making process and valuing individual contributions without gender discrimination or any form of bias.
 - iii. Decisions concerning staff development and succession plan(s) shall be based on merit and far from any form of discrimination or bias.

- iv. Without discrimination or any form of bias, all staff shall benefit from training opportunities based on skills-gap analysis, succession plan(s) and project requirements of their Unit or department.
- v. KSTU shall not tolerate any kind of inappropriate conduct, including but not limited to harassment, bullying, discrimination toward any staff.

D. General Policy Statements

In general, the Academic Board shall:

- i. Promote a working environment where all staff are treated with respect and dignity.
- ii. Ensure that no-one is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.
- iii. Challenge discriminatory behaviour or attitudes wherever and whenever they occur.
- iv. Respond swiftly and sensitively to any incidences of discrimination.
- v. Provide any reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities to ensure they have access to services and employment.
- vi. Ensure that religious beliefs and related observances of members of staff are respected and accommodated wherever possible; giving that the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

- vii. Ensure that the pregnancy and/or maternity needs of female staff are considered - facilitating the integration of maternity and paternity with work through strategies such as breastfeeding time, shorter working hours for mothers within the first year after birth and days of leave for fathers - first five (5) working days after wife's delivery.
- viii. Conduct regular surveys on the internal perception of the work environment regarding equality, diversity and inclusion; and proffer suggestions for continuous improvement.
- ix. Acknowledge the individuality of each member of staff.

7.0 BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

The grievance procedure as stipulated in the University Statutes shall be used by aggrieved staff to make a formal complaint regarding any instance of harassment or discrimination.

The Academic Board shall design and disseminate internal protocols to follow in case of violence, harassment and discrimination, including protection measures for victims and witnesses.

The Academic Board shall open direct and anonymous communication channels to report and/or prevent situations that put the physical or emotional safety of staff at risk.

Breaches of the Gender Equality and Diversity Policy will constitute gross misconduct and shall give rise to penalties as stipulated in the University Statutes.

KsTU is committed to protecting staff members who report what they reasonably and in good faith believe to be any

instance of harassment or discrimination under the terms of this policy from retaliation. Retaliation against a person reporting breaches of this policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and penalties up to and including dismissal.

8.0 DEFINITIONS

Discrimination: occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person.

Diversity: refers to the full range of different social backgrounds and identities that make up populations. It includes, but is not limited to, gender, ethnic origin, nationality or citizenship, age, disability, language, political opinions, religious beliefs, social background, physical appearance and colour.

Employee/Staff: For the purpose of this policy, the term includes workers of the university (full/ part time) Members, Contract Staff, National Service Personnel, Volunteers, and Interns.

Gender: refers to a person's biologically determined identity that relates to masculinity and femininity.

Gender-Based violence (GBV): refers to categories that include, but not limited to, sexual violence, sexual harassment, femicide, sexual exploitation and abuse, and denial of resources, opportunities and services.

Harassment: is defined as any behaviour which is unwanted, and 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.

Inclusion: refers to reducing inequalities based on social backgrounds, identities, roles and power relations.

Prospective Employee: is an individual who has contacted KSTU for the purpose of requesting for information concerning employment with the institution.

Retaliation: means any direct or indirect action that might be threatened or taken to the detriment of a member of staff who engaged in reporting misconduct or who is suspected of doing so.

REFERENCES

- AMIN KAWAR AND SONS Gender diversity and Inclusion Policy
www.kawarshipping.com CAPSUS Gender Diversity and
Inclusion Policy. www.capsus.mx
- GAIN Workplace Gender, Equality and Diversity Policy 2019
www.gainhealth.org IFRC Gender and Diversity 2020
www.ifrc.org
- Sustainable Development Goals www.sdgs.un.org>goals
- UNHCR Africa UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Policy www.unhcr.org/africa University of Cyprus www.ucy.ac.cy
- University of Ghana Gender Policy 2023 www.ug.edu.gh