Equal Opportunities for Students

1 Introduction
The University's Mission Statement is:
‘to understand, empower and act, to enhance the lives of individuals and the prospects of communities in a rapidly changing world.’

As a reflection of its mission the University is a large, international and multicultural community which values and welcomes diversity.

2 Statement of Policy
The governing body of the University, the University's Council, has agreed the following statement of policy in relation to equality for students for students and potential students:

(1) The University is a major employer, provider of education and other services, and purchaser of goods, works and services. Through its policies and practices the University is committed to equality and fair treatment for all its students and staff and for potential members of its student and staff community and for other users of its services.

(2) The University aims to create an atmosphere of learning that embraces and values difference and expects all members of the University to welcome and value diversity. The University of East Anglia ensures that no student or applicant for study will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, caste, colour, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, gender fluidity, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion, belief or lack of belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other criterion accepted as irrelevant by the University's Council. It will ensure fair treatment for all students in access to learning opportunities, teaching, assessment and support and welfare services. The University will make reasonable adjustments where needed and works proactively and continuously to improve this.

(3) The University recognises that as a public body it has a particular duty to promote equality. The University as an employer, an education and service provider, and purchaser of goods, works and services, is committed to the elimination of unlawful discrimination. It monitors and reviews the impact of its policies and procedures and takes steps to ensure that all members of the University community are aware of their responsibilities under the University's equality policies and agreed Equality Strategy, as overseen by the Equality and Diversity Committee.
Code of Practice

1 Introduction

1.1 The University's Statement of Policy on Equality for Students recognises the University's legal obligations as an employer, a provider of education and other services, and purchaser of goods, works and services. The University recognises that there are many other factors which may lead to unfair discriminatory practices in employment and the provision of education and other services, even if these are not unlawful. This Code of Practice is designed to promote equality for all students and to ensure that individual educational decisions are related only to the relevant merits, abilities and potential of individuals.

1.2 The purpose of this Code of Practice is to outline practices by which the University's Statement of Policy may be given full effect and to ensure that the University fulfils its obligations under current equality legislation.

1.3 This code should be read in conjunction with the University's other equality policies, its Athena Swan Action Plan and current Equality Strategy. These cover students and employees. Details of the Codes of Practice/Action Plan may be consulted via the following websites:

For Students
https://portal.uea.ac.uk/equality/school-equality-web-pages

For Staff
https://www.uea.ac.uk/equality

2 Responsibility of the University Community

All members of the University community are required to comply with these Schemes/Codes of Practice and with the relevant legal requirements and are expected to assist in the removal of any unlawfully discriminatory practices that may exist in the University by drawing them to the attention of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for equality in the particular area concerned via the relevant Director of University Services see 8.3 below).

3 Communication

All students should be made aware of the University's Statement of Policy and of these Schemes/Codes of Practice. Students will have access to the documents via the Student Portal, Schools of Studies, Faculty Offices, the Academic Division, the Student Support Service, the Union of UEA Students, and the University's website.

4 Admissions

4.1 The key selection criteria for admission to the University are the academic ability and potential of the applicant and any professional body requirements, where relevant.

4.2 The Schools of Studies are responsible for ensuring that admissions
criteria and procedures enable applicants from all educational backgrounds to demonstrate their academic potential and their ability to meet professional body requirements where relevant.

4.3 No applicant will be treated less favourably on grounds of age, caste, colour, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion, belief or lack of belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other criterion accepted as irrelevant by the University's Council. (Certain additional procedures apply if an applicant is under 18 years of age at the point of intended registration in order for the University to comply with existing child protection and other relevant legislation).

4.4 The University welcomes applications from people with disabilities and will put in place reasonable adjustments to enable academically qualified applicants to access the full range of educational provision offered by the University. More detailed information about the ways in which the University does this is contained in 'Information for Students with Disabilities'.

4.5 Applicants for admission to the University who are unsuccessful in their application have a right of complaint (on the grounds of procedural irregularity, prejudice or bias, or extenuating circumstances). Information about the complaints procedure is available from the University's Admissions and Outreach Office.

4.6 The University will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that its publicity material, events and information services are accessible to all applicants.

4.7 The University is committed to providing equality awareness guidance and training for staff involved in admissions and selection and expects staff to participate fully in this.

5 Educational and Service Provision
5.1 The University will promote equality of opportunity through its educational provision and its approach to teaching and learning through course design and delivery, and assessment.

5.2 The University is committed to the principles of equality through access to, and fair treatment in, the services it provides and the facilities it offers to its students and to its employees. Where a service cannot be offered to all who wish to use it, any restrictions on access, or any decision to restrict access, will be reasonable and lawful.

5.3 The University will make reasonable adjustments to facilitate access by students with disabilities to teaching and learning, whatever the level of the course or the mode of provision, to assessment, and to the full range of educational and other facilities and services to ensure their full participation in the life of the University.
5.4 The University will keep under review the membership and criteria for membership of its Committees to ensure fair and equal opportunities for participation.

5.5 The University will, as a matter of both best practice and policy use inclusive language in its publications and other communications.

6 Complaints
6.1 The University will deal with complaints that concern the University's Codes of Practice/Policies in accordance with the University's Complaints Procedure as set out in the UEA Calendar.

6.2 Students who make complaints through the Procedure will not be disadvantaged for having done so in good faith. However, the University expects that students will not engage in frivolous or malicious complaints. If it is found that a complaint has been brought with mischievous or malicious intent, this may prove grounds for disciplinary action against the complainant.

7 Harassment
The University is committed to maintaining a working and learning environment that is free from any form of harassment. It treats any allegations of harassment very seriously and has support structures and procedures for responding to and dealing with instances of harassment. Students should refer to the University's Guidelines for Students Dealing with Harassment on the Student Support Service website.

The Student Support Service and the Union of UEA Students (through the Union Advice Centre) offer confidential support and advice to all students with concerns.

8 Monitoring and Review of Policy and Practice
8.1 The University will develop its quality assurance and enhancement systems to monitor the student population by a range of characteristics identified as key by current equality legislation. In particular, monitoring systems will be developed to identify any differential impact on the student body arising from policy and practice in admissions and teaching and assessment. Profiles of admissions, academic progression, discontinuation of study, degree awards, first destinations, and the use and outcome of complaints and academic appeals procedures disaggregated by monitored protected characteristics will be developed for use as indicators.

8.2 The University will work proactively to ensure its equality policies are fully implemented. Action will include the provision of training, particularly for key staff groups where monitoring indicates that an area of policy or practice requires revision.

8.3 Responsibility for monitoring and review of equality matters in relation to students currently rests with four Committees of the University on
which the Union of UEA Students and the Graduate Students' Association are represented.

i) The Recruitment, Admissions and Marketing Committee is responsible to the University's Council and Senate for the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the University's equal opportunities policy and practice in connection with applicants to programmes of study at the University. The Committee is chaired by the Director of Admissions, accountable to the Vice-Chancellor, who is responsible for ensuring that these duties with respect to equal opportunities for applicants are carried out.

ii) The Learning and Teaching Committee is responsible to the Senate for the development, implementation, monitoring and review of equal opportunities policy and practice in connection with registered students. The Committee is chaired by a Pro-Vice-Chancellor, accountable to the Vice-Chancellor, who is responsible for ensuring that these duties with respect to equal opportunities for registered students are carried out.

iii) The Equality and Diversity Committee is responsible to the Council for the development, implementation, monitoring and review of equality policies for both students and staff. The Committee is chaired by a Pro-Vice-Chancellor, who is responsible for ensuring that these duties for both students and staff are carried out.

iv) The Senate has responsibility for the education and discipline of students and will receive an annual report on the operation and evaluation of the University's policies and Codes of Practice relating to equality. The Senate will also address, as and when necessary, matters of policy and/or practice having an impact on the equal opportunities of the University's students or applicants for study drawn to its attention by its Committees or members.

8.4 As the governing body of the University, the Council carries ultimate responsibility for the welfare of students and for ensuring that the policies and procedures of the University comply with its equality policies. The Council will receive the annual report of the Senate (see above) and consider any matters of policy and/or practice having an impact on the equality of the University's students or applicants for study drawn to its attention by its Committees or members.

9 Contacts
Students may seek advice on any of the above issues from their School, Faculty Office, the Student Support Service, the Union of UEA Students, the Graduate Students' Association, and additionally in the case of students with disabilities, the Disability Co-ordinator in the Student Support Service.

The Multifaith Centre and the University Medical Services are also available to students requiring their help.