



## **Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka**

**Policy Title – Policy on Equality / Non discrimination -SUSL**

**Policy Number – Policy / SUSL / Gov &Mgmt / 06**

**Effective Date –27.09.2021**

**Revised Dates – NA**

**Approving Authority – The Council, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka**

**Administrative Responsibility –**Heads of Departments, Deans of the Faculties, Faculty Boards, Senate, Council

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### **Overview**

Equality is ensuring the equal opportunities for every individuals to have a state of being equal. In order to ensure an equal community within the university, all the parties should experience indiscrimination or absence of discriminations. Discrimination can occur due to various reasons such as age, sex, disability (mental or physical), race, religion, physiological states (such as pregnancy, maternity), marital states, etc.

### **Purpose**

Purpose of having a policy on equality/ non discrimination is to ensure all the members in the university community are receiving the mental wellness to engage in their tasks. The prime aim of enhancing their mental wellbeing is to get maximum benefits to their lives and ultimately for the development of the university through improved working efficiency.

### **Legislative context**

University Act No: 16 of 1978 as amend by Act No: 07 of 1985 and No26 of 1988.

Bylaw relating to sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (Bylaw no.1 of 2019)

## Definitions

**Equality** -the right of different groups of people to have a similar social position and receive the same treatment

**Nondiscrimination** - Guarantee that human rights are exercised without discrimination of any kind based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status such as disability, age, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity, health status, place of residence, economic and social situation”.

**Disability** - a physical or a mental condition which has a substantial and long-term impact on your ability to do normal day to day activities.

## Scope

This policy is applicable for all the members in the university community and it monitors their rights protecting them from discriminations based on age, sex, disability, race, religion, physiological states (such as pregnancy, maternity), marital states, political views and activities, etc. Students (including internal students, post graduate students and students following courses in Centre for Open and Distance Learning), academic and academic supportive staff members, administrative officers, Non academic staff members are covered under this policy.

## Policy Statement

1. University should take its maximum effort to protect the right of the individual's equality, dignity and non-discrimination.
2. Equality policy should be applied to almost all the activities such as in policy making, teaching & learning process, supportive services, recruitment, promotion, research activities (including research grant allocations), scholarships and training programs (local or foreign) / conferences, performances appraisal and etc. It should promote fair access for all.
3. Under this policy all the members (Academic, academic supportive, administrative, non-academic and students) are protected and their right for equality is secured.
4. Proper mechanisms should be followed to ensure working capacity of the members of the university without any barrier of discriminations. Working environment should be maintained without victimization, harassments, discriminations etc. Hence the university should adopt mechanisms to maintain the equality among individuals.
5. Respect the differences of individual, maintain dignity among individuals and there should be tolerance to differences of individual.
6. Ensure fair treatment of employees, by tackling any kind of discrimination.

7. The right to have physical and mental health and wellbeing should be protected by taking relevant actions (disciplinary) against the parties or individuals who violate that right of the others. (eg. Groups of students violating the right of physical and mental health and wellbeing of other students).
8. While the university administration is taking care of the equality, the students and staff members also should pave their contribution to maintain the equality among the university community. Equal right for education of all the students should be secured without any disturbances such as forceful threats and violence. If it is violated, suitable disciplinary actions should be taken by the relevant authorities without any delay.
9. Every voice of equality should be listened carefully and grievances should be taken in to considerations.
10. Steps must be taken to strengthen the counselling services and allocate adequate resources for prevention of mental discriminations.
11. University should maintain the zero tolerance for ragging in order to maintain the right for education.
12. University shall consider strongly on the wellbeing of the members providing wellbeing services such as health service, children care centers, sport activities etc.
13. This policy should be in line with other policies of the university such as transfer policy, grievances policy, Bylaw relating to sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) of the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka.
14. Equality policy can be implemented by a committee (Committee for equality) appointed by the Vice chancellor. This committee should maintain the confidentiality of all complaints made by the victimized members of the university.

### **Implementation of the policy**

1. University (The Vice Chancellor) appoints a committee to handle complaints related to any kind of discrimination. This committee is appointed for a period of three years.
2. The committee shall work under the directive of the Vice Chancellor.
3. This committee should handle all the grievances of the university community pertaining to the discriminations.
4. This committee can have several members and it is headed by a senior academic member (chair of the committee). Other members of the committee may include at least two academic members from each faculty, Director -“Sith Arana”, proctor, director – Centre for gender equity and equality

of SUSL, director -student welfare, an administrative officer and a member from the nonacademic staff.

5. The committee should have the responsibility of promoting the indiscriminatory culture within the university and continuous monitoring should be done. Where ever the necessity arises, actions should be taken in line with the exciting legal framework.
6. The committee shall develop a code of conduct to be implemented.
7. The committee shall monitor the implementation of the policy and proper records should be maintained.
8. There should be a regular review of the progress having regular meetings.
9. Committee shall develop a mechanism to get information of discriminations effectively.
10. Any equality / indiscrimination related issues should be directed to the committee for equality through different methods such as verbal communications, online communications, written communication etc...
11. Committee shall identify the way of solving the problems in line with rules and regulations already exist or if the already existing methods are insufficient, get approval from the council for further actions.
12. Committee should make the university community aware about this policy with the aid of trained staff members on equality issues. The policy & policy updates should be made available in the university website and also in the website of the Center for Quality Assurance.
13. Any member who is subjected to any discrimination should be encouraged to refer to the policy and to make complaint to the committee.
14. Committee shall be responsible for the ensuring, promoting and sustaining the policy, therefore steps should be taken to monitor it effectively.
15. Committee shall produce an annual progress report on the activities done by the committee to the Vice Chancellor and it should be made available for all the members and subsequently it should be reported to the senate.
16. Policy should be evaluated and whenever necessary it can be amended with the recommendation of the Senate and followed by the Council approval.

**Responsibility:**

Chairman of the committee for equality,  
Directors of the Centers,  
Deans of the Faculties,  
Senate

**Promulgation:**

- i. This policy will be circulated as a printed document among all the faculties and will be available in faculty websites
- ii. Will appear in the QA (Quality Assurance) section of the university Website
- iii. Will appear in the University Web site
- iv. Will be available in the centers and in administrative entities
- v. Will be circulated among all the academic, academic supportive, administrative, non-academic staff members and students of the university

**Prepared by Centre for Quality Assurance**

**Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka**

**May 2021**

***\*\*\*\*This policy was approved at 253<sup>rd</sup> Senate and 276<sup>th</sup> Council***