

UGANDA MARTYRS UNIVERSITY



Gender and Inclusivity Policy

February 2025

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Definitions of Key Terms

Gender needs

These are categorized into practical and strategic needs. The practical needs are the requirements needed to address socially ascribed roles and responsibilities. Addressing the practical needs leaves the power-imbalance among different genders of students and members of staff in UMU unchanged. For instance, the desire of UMU to provide housing to all staff and students will address a practical need. The strategic needs seek to address the power imbalance among the different genders of students and staff. For instance, the intention of having gender equity and adoption of transformative learning and formative assessment in UMU will address a strategic need.

Gender blindness/gender neutrality

Refers to the tendency to ignore policy differential impacts on different genders of students and members of staff. Any policy considered to be gender neutral is gender blind because it does not recognize gender issues. For instance, the policy of admitting students to programs based only on their qualification is gender blind.

Gender biases/Gender discrimination

While gender bias refers to the tendency to think and act in favor of one gender at the detriment of the one not favored, gender discrimination refers to the tendency to think and act against the other gender.

Gender gap

Refers to the differences among genders when it comes to access to a particular service, or enjoyment of a specific right. For instance, if only the male students and staff have time for recreation, sports and games, then there is a gender gap in enjoyment of recreation, games and sports.

Gender equity

Refers to the mechanism put in place in order to realize equality. As such, gender equity is a method for realizing gender fairness. Equity calls for differentiated treatment in order to enable the enjoyment of rights by all students and staff members of UMU. Gender equity, therefore seeks tools to identify gender inequality and tools to address the identified inequality. For instance, the bursaries offered in UMU seek to bring a balance among diverse students.

Gender justice

Refers to the process of addressing a gender problem in a system to offer all students and members of UMU staff equal access to tools and opportunities.

Gender equality

Refers to the absence of discrimination against a student or member of staff on the basis of their gender. As such all students and members of UMU staff have equal chances, opportunities, allocation of resources and responsibilities, rights and rewards.

Gender responsiveness

Refers to a process of coming up with plans and policy actions to address identified gender gaps.

Gender mainstreaming

Is the process of integrating the issues of all students and UMU members of staff in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UMU philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, values, principles, policies, programs/courses, research, projects as well as outreach activities.

Diversity

Refers to the differences in background, ethnicity, religion, abilities, age, race, nationality, ethical value systems, political beliefs, social classes.

Inclusivity

Refers to bringing on board all diversities (race, ethnicity, gender, age, differently abled, religion & culture) that is to say; embracing everyone and enabling them to make meaningful contributions. For example, giving UMU employees and students a sense of belonging.

Stakeholders: Refer to all those that contribute to UMU's activities not limited to Students, Staff, Management Committee, Council Members, contractors and partners.

Abbreviations/Acronyms

UMU	Uganda Martyrs University
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

1.0 Introduction

A gender responsive and inclusive University is an enabler for the transformative learning and teaching environment and products. In turn, the wider community—the consumer of the University products becomes transformed and inclusive in any given context. This policy, therefore seeks to make UMU—the change agent of the society—gender responsive and inclusive by putting in place a framework that sanctions, addresses and prevents behavior, attitudes and mindsets that promote gender blindness, biases, gaps, discrimination, inequality and injustice. This framework consists of an elaborate plan and policy actions that are implemented to make UMU gender responsive and inclusive. This framework is applicable to all UMU staff and students, administrative units, partners and networks. It is informed by global, regional, national and local best practices, policies and legislations.

2.0 Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to address the gender and inclusivity needs of UMU in all its activities. Through this, UMU seeks to safeguard the rights of all staff and students and other stakeholders, promote sustainable and equitable development and build a blueprint for addressing problems related to this policy.

3.0 Rationale of the policy

Bearing the above purpose in mind, UMU through this policy is intentional in promoting a gender responsive, diverse and inclusive university and society.

4.0 Objectives of the policy

- a) To mainstream gender and inclusivity in UMU's Vision, Mission, Values and Ethical principles, programs, projects and policies.
- b) To provide a framework that guides the implementation of inclusive practices and equitable service delivery across the university.
- c) To guide the designing and implementation of transformative gender responsive curricula, research and outreach protocols while cultivating an inclusive and equitable environment that enhances their delivery and impact.
- d) To guide the formation and running of gender responsive clubs in every campus of UMU.
- e) To safeguard the rights of both the staff and students.

5.0 Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all of UMU's stakeholders: staff, students, and service providers. It intends to promote diversity and inclusion for everyone to feel a sense of belonging, well-being in their daily activities at and for the University. The other way of UMU making a difference in the field of higher education is to create an environment of diversity and equal opportunity, where qualified personnel get chances regardless of their visible or invisible diverse differences. Making a difference cannot be for only a section of society. In that case, accessibility, accommodation, accountability and adaptation are critical to the promotion of diversity and inclusion.

6.0 Policy Statement

UMU believes and is committed to addressing the gender and inclusivity needs of her community members as she strives to promote excellence in service of the Nation, Church and the entire world. Through this commitment, UMU seeks to safeguard the rights of all staff and students, promote sustainable and equitable development and build a blueprint for addressing problems.

Through this policy, UMU intends to provide a framework that ensures policies, actionable plans, behaviors, attitudes and mindsets are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all the members of the community as they seek to enjoy their rights, exercise their responsibilities, access opportunities and gain gender justice. This is in line with UMU's values of equality and openness and the ethical principle of accountability. It informs UMU's partnerships and networks that seek to achieve inclusivity and gender justice in accessing of knowledge, decision making and deployment of power to achieve the public good.

In terms of usage, this policy shall provide guidelines and principles that shall then be translated into strategy, systems and structures for implementation (a manual). Specifically, the policy shall be incorporated into work plans of the different UMU units, UMU's monitoring and evaluation framework, practice guidelines, administrative policies and, ultimately, should also be reflected in the culture and practices of staff and students of UMU. Specific indicators shall be developed and monitored regularly to keep track of progress in this regard.

7.0 Principles to guide implementation of this policy

7.1 UMU Philosophy, Vision, Mission, Values and Objectives

The UMU philosophy, vision, mission, values and objectives shall be interpreted in such a manner that they are inclusive and gender responsive to empower all UMU stakeholders. The implementation committee shall develop an inclusive and gender responsive mechanism to guide this interpretation of the philosophy, vision, mission, values and programs of the university.

7.2 UMU Policies

Every policy of UMU shall be inclusive and gender responsive in addressing the needs of different genders and diversities. Any policy that is considered to be neutral shall be treated as exclusionary and gender blind because the power dynamics underlying it do not respect diversity and all genders. An implementation committee shall be created to vet UMU policies to ensure that they are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all UMU stakeholders.

7.3 Curriculum and course design, delivery and assessment

University curricula and courses shall be conceptualized and articulated with diversity and gender responsiveness in their design, delivery and assessment. The implementation committee shall develop an inclusive and gender responsive mechanism to guide the design, delivery, involvement, engagement and assessment of university curricula and all courses to eliminate the gender gaps.

7.4 Student admission, performance and completion

Inclusivity and Gender equity shall influence decision making in student admissions, and completion. Elements that offset diversity and gender equity in performance and retention shall be identified and addressed. The admission policy shall be reformulated in such a manner that it is inclusive and gender responsive. Equity shall be employed to ensure there is diversity and gender justice in students' admission and completion. For instance, affirmative action shall be employed to maintain equity and equality among genders and diversities.

7.5 Staff recruitment, training, promotions and retention

Inclusivity and gender equity shall be adopted in staff recruitment, training, promotions and retention. The welfare of the staff shall be inclusive and gender

responsive in addressing diversity and gender needs of each staff to reduce staff turnover rate and increase levels of retention. The principle of transparency shall be employed in handling staff issues to promote inclusivity, participation and empowerment and a sense of belonging. Endowments for inclusive and gender responsive training, promotions and retention shall be put in place. The Human Resource Director shall initiate an inclusive and gender responsive staff recruitment & development process. The diversity and gender disaggregated data shall be maintained as the staff recruitment, training, promotion and retention is monitored and evaluated.

7.6 Inclusivity and Gender Budgeting and Resource Mobilization

All the staff and students shall be trained in diversity and gender budgeting and resource mobilization to ensure inclusivity and gender responsiveness in the distribution of material and human resources. With the deployment of equity and equality, there shall be similar and differentiated treatment of one's diversity and gender from another in order to attain diversity and gender justice. There shall be accountability mechanisms for resources allocated for diversity and gender equity, equality and justice within full scholarships, bursaries, or exemptions.

7.7 Environment

The class and out-of-class environment shall be designed bearing in mind the different needs of all students, staff and other stakeholders. The diversity and gender blind/neutral language, the non-diverse and non-gendered learning equipment, use of space and expressions shall be addressed. For instance, spaces shall be created for the abled differently and breastfeeding students and staff mothers. The support personnel of the abled differently and breastfeeding students and staff-mothers shall be catered for during student and staff retreats and trainings. The washrooms shall be catered to address specific needs of all students and staff. During internship, the diversity and gender needs of students shall be catered for. The whole University environment shall be accessible freely and fairly. Learning environment and resources such as the library and dining hall shall cater for all the diversities. Renovations and new school buildings shall cater for the abled differently individuals.

7.8 Research and Innovation

Research and innovation ventures shall be designed in such a manner that the needs of all students and staff are catered for. Gender responsive research designs and

outreach protocols shall take into account diversity when working with communities and innovations shall explicitly recognize the gender dimension. The diversity and gender dimension of innovation shall be included in every innovative venture. A diversity and gender dimension shall be included in every research question. Equal participation in publications by all genders and inclusivity in all disciplines in regard to research funding shall be encouraged.

7.9 Harassment

The scope of harassment shall be widened beyond sexual harassment to include any act that would deny UMU of diversity and inclusion, such as bullying, and exclusionary use of language. The implementation committee shall develop an anti-harassment user friendly mechanism that does not stigmatize the victims of harassment. This mechanism shall empower all students and staff to enable the containment, management and elimination of any form of harassment within the University. Discrimination of people living with disabilities and refugees while denying them a chance to participate in particular activities shall not be entertained.

7.10 Recreation, Games and Sports

There shall be diversity and gender justice in the distribution of roles, benefits and burdens to ensure that all students and staff have ample time for recreation, games and sports. In collaboration with the equal opportunity and gender desk in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the inclusivity and gender NGO activists, and the respective offices shall mount a campaign to enable recreation, games and sports become meaningful to all the members of UMU community.

7.11 Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring of the gender responsive and inclusivity policy shall be done at all levels: i) At the Senior management level, ii) Middle management level, iii) Lower management level, and iv) Recipients level in such a manner that every member of the University community shall be compliant to the policy. Evaluation shall be done at the above four levels. Furthermore, other monitoring interventions such as those crafted by the Quality Assurance Directorate shall be taken to be an opportunity to monitor the implementation of the gender and inclusivity policy.

The implementation committee in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Directorate shall develop a monitoring and evaluation mechanism of gender responsiveness and inclusivity.

Monitoring and evaluation shall be done regularly. The results of monitoring and evaluation shall be translated into action plans for improvement, rewards and sanctions. In addition, these results shall feed the review and amendment of the policy. The implementation committee shall have representatives of all levels.

7.12 Qualities of the Implementation Committee Members

They shall be;

- i. UMU community members
- ii. Knowledgeable in and passionate about diversity and gender issues
- iii. Representative of diversity in terms of campus, academic staff, non-academic staff, gender, and abled-differently
- iv. Persons of integrity

7.13 Terms of Reference of the Implementation Committee

The Implementation Committee shall be guided by the following terms;

- i. develop the implementation framework and manual of this policy.
- ii. scrutinize UMU policies to ensure that they are inclusive and gender responsive to the needs of UMU stakeholders.
- iii. operationalize the policy, including conducting sensitization campaigns.
- iv. develop an inclusive and gender responsive mechanism to guide; the designing, delivery and assessment of curricula; research and outreach roles.
- v. develop an inclusive and gender responsive mechanism to guide the interpretation of UMU philosophy, vision, mission, values and programs.
- vi. develop an anti-harassment user friendly mechanism that does not stigmatize the victims of harassment.
- vii. mount a campaign to enable recreation, games and sports become meaningful to all the members of UMU community in collaboration with the equal opportunity and gender desk in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, and the inclusivity and gender Non-Governmental Organization activists.
- viii. develop a gender conflict resolution mechanism
- ix. develop a monitoring and evaluation mechanism of gender responsiveness and inclusivity in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Directorate.

- x. regularly monitor the implementation of the policy, and give feedback for improvement.

8.0 Legal framework and other complimentary policies

In developing this policy, reference was made to internal and external policies including:

- i. Uganda National Gender Policy 2017
- ii. UMU HIV and AIDS and Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy 2009

9.0 Accounting Officer

The Accounting officer for this policy shall be the Deputy Vice Chancellor.

10.0 Responsible University Officer/Chair

Appointed Gender and Inclusivity Officer

The roles and responsibilities for oversight and implementation of the policy are as follows:

- (i) Oversight for Policy Implementation: This shall be carried out by the Management Committee that shall appoint the Gender and Inclusivity Policy Implementation Committee for further support.
- (ii) There shall be a gender department to coordinate gender and inclusivity activities of the university. This department shall be headed by gender and inclusivity officer in liaison with gender and inclusivity focal persons.
- (iii) The Gender and inclusivity Focal Persons: There shall be Gender and Inclusivity Focal Persons at every faculty/campus who will liaise with other staff at the faculty/campus, and prepare an annual report that will be presented and discussed at UMU's annual budget conference.
- (iv) Specific Responsibilities: Specific responsibilities for implementation of different aspects of the Gender and Inclusivity Policy will be allocated by the Management Committee.

11.0 Review date

This policy was approved by the **101st University Council meeting** that sat on **8th February 2025**.

After every five (5) years, this policy shall be reviewed in tandem with the University practice on review of policies. Once the senate adopts the proposed amendments, they shall be sent to the University Council for approval.



Most Rev. Raphael p'Mony Wokorach, MCCJ
Chairperson, UMU Council



Rev. Dr. Josef Buchana Kisoga
Secretary, UMU Council