

WIUT Diversity and Dignity Policy

Author	Davron Abdigapparov Head of WIUT DIS
Coordinating office E-mail	information@wiut.uz dis@wiut.uz
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Section 1: Diversity and Dignity Policy

1.1 Introduction

WIUT is a University where diversity is celebrated and where everyone is welcome. We seek to make the world a more inclusive, sustainable, better and healthier place through our educational, research and knowledge exchange endeavours.

Our values: Progressive, Compassionate and Responsible support this purpose. Living these values will create a positive and safe place to study with a culture that allows all students of the University community to be themselves, and to feel proud of being a part of the Westminster International University in Tashkent.

1.2 Statement of Intent

At WIUT the diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity are at the core of how we engage with students, applicants, visitors and all our stakeholders. We are fully committed to enabling a supportive and safe learning environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, is based on mutual respect and trust, and in which bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination and victimisation are neither tolerated nor acceptable.

This will support students to reach their full potential, regardless of their age, disability, sex, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, ethnic or national origins, family circumstances, nationality, political beliefs and affiliations, socio-economic background, or other distinction/s (distinctive feature/s) protected by the national legislation of Uzbekistan and in accordance with its international agreements.

Relevant definitions can be found in Appendix 1.

1.3 Purpose and Scope

1.3.1 Purpose

The Diversity and Dignity policy supports the commitment of WIUT to diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity and protects the well-being of students of the University. The Policy also sets out the University's position on bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, unlawful discrimination and victimisation, and provides a framework for students to understand the routes by which concerns and complaints about such matters may be raised and resolution sought.

See Appendix 2 for further information.

1.3.2 Scope

This Policy covers study-related activities including extra-curricular activities and events at all WIUT sites and off site, including overseas, as part of the normal learning environment. The behaviours and responsibilities set out in this Policy apply to all students, including visiting and placement students and alumni.

Further information can be found in the WIUT Student Code of Conduct.

The principles of the statement of intent extend to expectations of visitors and external users of WIUT premises.

1.4 Training and Awareness

WIUT will ensure appropriate development opportunities are provided for students, to raise awareness of expected behaviours that demonstrate understanding of diversity and dignity, and act in supportive and compassionate ways towards all students of the University community. This training and awareness building will support students to develop competency to respond to issues that may need to be addressed. This will include universal and role specific training on relevant topics.

In order for this policy to be fair and effective, the whole WIUT community should be aware of it and embed its principles in their interactions with one another.

This policy and notice of any updates or changes to it will be disseminated to current students via the WIUT SU. The policy will also be available via the University intranet.

1.5 Responsibilities

The responsibilities with respect to this Policy are laid out below.

1.5.1 Individuals

It is the duty of students of the University community to comply with both the letter and spirit of the Diversity and Dignity Policy. Students of the University community should ensure that their behaviour towards others does not cause offence and is not and could not in any way be considered as bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination or victimisation.

Differences of attitude or culture and misinterpretation of social signals can mean that what is perceived as harassment or other unacceptable conduct by one

person may not be apparent to another. It is important to be sensitive to the feelings and reactions of others.

Individuals will ensure that they:

- treat everyone with courtesy, respect and dignity and foster a supportive and inclusive environment
- embrace diversity and inclusion and promote equality
- build and maintain excellent working relationships at all levels across the University
- consider the appropriateness of their behaviour and the effect it has on others and be prepared to adjust it if necessary, demonstrating sensitivity and respect to the views and needs of others
- participate in the implementation of this Policy where appropriate
- challenge bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination and victimisation as and when appropriate, or escalate their concerns to a more senior person, if they do not feel comfortable directly challenging others
- contribute to a stimulating learning and working environment which is supportive and fair, based on mutual respect and trust, and in which bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination and victimisation are neither tolerated nor acceptable

1.5.2 University Leaders and Managers

Leaders and Managers will additionally ensure that they:

- make every effort to ensure that bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, unlawful discrimination and victimisation do not occur in study areas for which they are responsible
- respond sensitively and supportively to any student who alleges bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination or victimisation and provide clear signposting of the correct procedures to follow and support available
- monitor whether any instances of victimisation or other retaliatory or unacceptable behaviour arise as a result of a complaint or grievance being made
- take early action when aware of unacceptable behaviour to address it before a complaint or grievance is made (which may be sufficient to address the behaviour)
- ensure that students know how to raise issues of concern and are aware of the Diversity and Dignity Policy and sources of support
- create a stimulating learning and working environment which is supportive and fair, based on mutual respect and trust, and in which bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination and victimisation are neither tolerated nor acceptable

1.5.3 WIUT

- will seek actively to promote equality and diversity and strive to create an environment which is inclusive and supportive and free from bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, unlawful discrimination and victimisation
- will neither practice unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation nor encourage students to do so and will act robustly to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct
- will not victimise any person who has complained of bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct or discrimination, or who has given information in connection with such a complaint or grievance
- will provide opportunities for reflection and enhancement of its approaches and policies in this area

1.6 Confidentiality

- Complaints or grievances about bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination or victimisation will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate procedure or regulations set out in Section 2 below, and should be treated confidentially by those involved in those procedures as required by those procedures and regulations as further described in this section.
- Appropriate confidentiality will normally be observed for both the person raising the complaint or grievance and any subject of that complaint/grievance. In this context, confidentiality relates to the process and its outcomes, details of the case and any investigations (including related investigations). Only those who need to know details of the case will have access to information, including the reporting and responding parties. It should be noted that in the case of anonymous complaints or grievances, the extent to which procedure can progress may be limited.
- During any formal procedure, evidence or statements provided by the complainant, any subject of the complaint or grievance and any witnesses may form part of the documentation, which is to be shared, as appropriate, for the purposes of completing that formal procedure. The information may also be used at a disciplinary hearing, during mediation and/or litigation process, and in the latter case could therefore become public.

In some circumstances, the University may disclose information relating to complaints or grievances, including where it is required by law or for the discharge of its duty of care.

1.7 Malicious or vexatious complaints or grievances

Complaints or grievances of bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination and victimisation are treated seriously by WIUT. If there is evidence that a complaint or grievance has been made vexatiously or maliciously or the complaint or grievance is deemed not of genuine substance by the investigating officers, a recommendation may be made that no further action be taken.

In the event that the complaint or grievance is deemed vexatious or malicious, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken. Victimisation and retaliation as a result of action being taken under this Policy is unacceptable and may also lead to disciplinary action.

1.8 Further support

Support is available to students and colleagues who raise, or who are subject to, a complaint or grievance in relation to the matters covered by this Policy, as follows:

For students:

- Diversity and Inclusivity Support Team
- Student Support Services
- Ask WIUT
- Academic Counselors

Section 2: Procedural framework that supports the Diversity and Dignity Policy

2.1 Procedures

The following procedures are used to deal with alleged breaches of the Diversity and Dignity Policy promptly and fairly. Procedures are intended to deal with any breach (whether minor, repeated or serious breaches) at the appropriate level with sensitivity and impartiality, both for those raising a complaint or grievance and any subject of that complaint/grievance.

Person raising a complaint or grievance	Subject of complaint or grievance	Appropriate procedure
Student	Student	Student Disciplinary Regulations
Student	University / Colleague	Student Complaints Procedure
Colleague	Student	Student Disciplinary Regulations

Where the relevant procedure listed above provides for an informal resolution stage, students are encouraged to consider such a route in the first instance and if appropriate to the circumstances. For further guidance about the routes for raising and resolving issues and concerns, please see Appendix 2.

2.2 Formal complaint or grievance

Any complaints or grievances made about bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination or victimisation will be investigated thoroughly and without delay, according to the relevant procedures. A formal complaint or grievance should be made in accordance with the procedures or regulations identified in Section 2.1.

2.3 Monitoring

The University will undertake, disseminate and publish detailed annual equality and diversity monitoring reports relating to students. Naturally, these reports will not identify any individual names or cases.

WIUT Information & Compliance will provide a report of casework considered under the Student Complaints Policy and Procedure which is presented annually to the Academic Council for monitoring purposes.

Appendix 1: Definitions and Examples

All definitions given below are equally applicable to their analog, digital, electronic and online versions/forms of communications and expressions which can be created/drawn/edited in the format of sketches, drawings, pictures, memes, GIFs, videos and in any other form and or format. For further support [WIUT Student Disciplinary Regulations](#) can be referred.

Bullying (including online bullying)

Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, which may involve the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Bullying may be physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct.

Harassment

Unwanted conduct 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.

Students can raise concerns about behaviour that they consider constitutes bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination, or victimisation even if it is not directed at them.

Sexual Misconduct

Unacceptable conduct of a sexual nature, whether or not unwanted, through any medium, including physical, verbal or online, including (but not limited to):

- harassment
- violence
- assault
- abuse
- threat
- coercion
- contact, advances, insult, banter or innuendo
- intimidation
- offensive, obscene, degrading, insulting or inappropriate communication, messaging, calls or circulation of materials.

Victimisation

Victimisation means subjecting someone to a detriment or otherwise treating them less favourably because they have made (or may make) an allegation or complaint or have otherwise raised (or may raise) a concern about the conduct of a student or other individual – for example, making a complaint of harassment or a report of sexual misconduct.

Unlawful Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination means less favourable treatment of students by the University relating to someone's age, disability, gender, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief.

Microaggressions

Everyday verbal, non-verbal and environmental slights, snubs or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalised group membership, including (but not limited to):

- Casual/ 'off the cuff' remarks
- Inappropriate jokes
- Questions or comments that reveal assumptions based on stereotypes
- Questioning lived experience

Examples of unacceptable conduct

The following lists provide examples, but are not exhaustive, of unacceptable conduct, whether occurring face-to-face, online (e.g. via electronic media such as email and social media or by phone/mobile) or otherwise.

Harassment:

- physical assault or the threat of violence
- unwanted physical contact, sexual advances or innuendo
- verbal abuse, including threats, derogatory name calling, insults, ridicule or belittling of an individual
- using humour to put another person or group of people down, for example, telling jokes relating to someone's age, disability, gender, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief
- spreading malicious lies or making insulting comments (including relating to someone's age, disability, gender, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief
- display or circulation of abusive or offensive materials, whether online or offline, for example by email or on the internet, or on a whiteboard
- sending offensive text messages
- making unnecessary and degrading references to someone's age, disability, gender, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief
- ignoring or patronising an individual
- ostracism or exclusion from normal conversation in the work or study environment, or from work- or study-related social events
- coercion, such as pressure to subscribe to a particular political or religious belief
- intrusive behaviour such as the invasion of personal space, pestering, spying or stalking
- persistent, unwelcome contact - including text messages, emails, phone calls, gifts
- deliberately undermining someone - by spreading malicious lies, making insulting comments or bringing a vindictive allegation of unacceptable behaviour
- asking a person intrusive questions about their private life

Bullying:

- psychological intimidation, humiliation, excessive and/or unreasonable criticism or fault-finding of an individual
- asserting a position of intellectual superiority in an aggressive, abusive or offensive manner whether orally or in writing, publicly or in private
- abuse of power or behaviour that causes fear or distress for others
- acting unreasonably by failing and refusing to listen, reflect and take appropriate account of the position or needs of other people

Appendix 2: Routes for raising and resolving issues and concerns

For students:

Status	Example	What student can expect
A disclosure	e.g. a student tells a tutor but does not provide details that allow an investigation to be conducted	<p>Signposting to reporting platform</p> <p>Referral to the Student Support team</p> <p>Signposting to external agencies (e.g. Police) and charity/support organisations as listed by WIUT Student Support Services</p>
A report	e.g. a student reports to the University with details of the incident but does not state what action they are expecting	<p>As above for a disclosure</p> <p>Access to specialist internal advice and support</p> <p>Liaison on academic or practical adjustments</p> <p>Advice on options (including making a complaint that the University can investigate)</p>
A complaint	e.g. a student submits an account of the incident and confirms that they wish the University to take protective action and investigate	<p>Initiation of the Student complaints procedure and signposting to relevant support</p> <p>Consideration of immediate protective actions</p>