GENDER SEGREGATION JOINT CODE OF PRACTICE

1. Introduction

1.1 This Code of Practice has been produced in accordance with the guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), published in July 2014 and in compliance with the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998 and Section 43 of the Education Act (No 2) 1986.

1.2 The Code is also complementary to the Universities UK guidance on gender segregation and freedom of speech and expression.

1.3 Keele University, Keele Students' Union (KeeleSU) and the Keele Postgraduate Association (KPA) have jointly committed to this Code of Practice on Gender Segregation.

2. General Principles

2.1 The general expectation is that any event or meeting held on University premises will be open to all, regardless of gender.

2.2 Gender segregation is not permitted in the University's normal academic, teaching and research activities.

2.3 Gender segregation is not permitted in any academic meetings or at events, lectures, meetings provided for students, or at events attended by the public or employees of the University or KeeleSU or the KPA.

2.4 Segregation by gender is permitted during collective worship or practice because it is exempt under the equality law.

2.5 All employees of the University, KeeleSU & KPA have a responsibility to ensure that no enforced segregation by gender takes place at any event, unless it is specifically for religious worship or practice.

2.6 All employees of the University, KeeleSU & KPA must not knowingly facilitate discrimination by others at the request of an external speaker or an individual attending or wishing to attend an event.

2.7 Any complaints received on gender segregation must not be ignored. Complaints from students are governed by Regulation B7: https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/regulationb7/. Members of staff should address complaints to their line manager.

2.8 <u>Exceptions:</u> there are a limited number of express exceptions: communal accommodation in residential accommodation; toilets and changing facilities; sports sessions involving a high degree of physical contact; positive action measures to overcome a disadvantage or to tackle low participation. Religious worship or practice is also exempt.

3. Seating Arrangements and Voluntary Segregation

3.1 Any seating arrangement amounts to direct discrimination if it results in disadvantage to any participant (actual or potential) because of gender.

3.2 Genuinely voluntary gender segregation is permissible.

3.3 To be voluntary, all attendees would need to be at liberty freely to choose where they wished to sit without any direction, whether explicit or merely an implicit expectation.

3.4 Involuntary segregation will constitute unlawful discrimination.

4. EHRC Guidance

4.1 The full EHRC guidance is available at: https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/gender-segregation-events-and-meetings-guidance-universities-and-students.

5. Related University Policies and Procedures

5.1 Guidance relating to events featuring external speakers on University premises is outlined within the University's Speaker and Events Approval Procedure and the Freedom of Expression Code of Practice.

5.2 Guidance relating to society events is outlined within the Group Social Events Code of Conduct.

5.3 These documents, along with other policy documents that members of the University must adhere to, can be found within the University's Policy Zone: http://www.keele.ac.uk/policyzone/.

6. Review, Approval and Publication

6.1 The Legal & Governance Team, on behalf of the Secretary to Council, shall be responsible for ensuring that this Code of Practice remains fits for purpose at least annually, in addition to the full review that shall take place at least every three years.

6.2 The University Executive Committee (or nominated sub-group) shall have final responsibility for approval of any changes to the Code of Practice.

7. Document Control Information

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