



Gender Equality and Sexual Diversity Committee Policy

1. Introduction

The University of Malta (UM) values gender equality, sexual diversity, and inclusion. UM is committed to making the necessary changes to ensure that an equitable and inclusive environment is created, while celebrating gender and sexual diversity, promoting inclusion and protecting the human rights of all persons linked to it. UM strives to ensure that all students and employees - whatever their sex, gender identity and sexual orientation - enjoy the opportunity to participate in any activity or event concerning the University, depending on their capabilities. The objective of UM is to enable and facilitate the participation of staff, students, alumni and visitors while enabling them to achieve their full potential as members of the University community, Maltese and global society. Its aim is to address structural, cultural and/or situational barriers when these arise, to facilitate the participation of the diverse population within this institution, by adopting an intersectional approach.

UM's support for gender and sexual equity, diversity and inclusion is grounded in an institution-wide commitment to achieving a working, teaching, and learning environment that is free of discrimination and harassment as enshrined in the Constitution of Malta and the Equality for Men and Women Act (Chap 456). In striving to become an equitable community, we are committed to eliminating, reducing or mitigating the adverse effects of structural and systemic barriers which impact on full participation in University life, whether these are physical, cultural, situational, environmental, attitudinal, communicational or technological.

Our teaching, research, community engagement projects and other activities take place in the context of a highly diverse society. This diversity is valuable to the University since it contributes to the diversification of ideas and perspectives and thereby enriches us and our operations. We proactively seek to increase diversity among our community members, and it is our aim to have a student body as well as teaching, and support staff that reflect this diversity.

UM believes that to do well, people need to work, study, research and engage in community activities in an environment that is inclusive and embracing the broadest range of people. Inclusivity helps people achieve their full potential, and leads to the free expression of their diverse perspectives. The aim is to create an equitable and inclusive working and learning environment because this will enable UM diverse staff and student body to maximize their creativity and their contributions.

Striving to create an equitable, diverse as well as inclusive community, one that is respectful and protects its members' civic and human rights, requires the work of every member of the community, whether these are students, teaching staff, support staff, researchers, alumni, guests and stakeholders.

UM will work so that the University continues to incorporate gender equality and sexual diversity while adopting an intersectional approach when it comes to policies, practices and measures while at the same time complying with national and international legislation that promote equality and human rights.

To attain this, the Gender Equality and Sexual Diversity Committee is promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to the following key priority areas:

1. Governance bodies, key actors and Decision making
2. Recruitment, progression, and retention
3. Work and personal life integration
4. Researcher and research on gender equality and sex and gender perspective
5. Integration of sex and gender dimension in teaching curricula

2. History

The Committee was originally set up in 1991 as the Gender Issues Committee in order to act as a focal point on gender issues on the recommendations of the Women in Society Secretariat.

3. Terms of Reference

The Committee, appointed by Council, advises the Rector and University Council on gender equality, sexual orientation and gender identity and reports annually to Council. Its terms of reference are to:

1. identify sources of unequal opportunities, treatment, environment for students and staff
2. promote a policy of equitable opportunity, including specific help to help female, LGTIQ+ staff and students when faced with direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation, harassment of any type, freedom of movement. GESDC helps design and implement UM [Gender+ Equity Plan](#)
3. receives and monitors complaints from University staff and students regarding sex, gender based, and sexual discriminatory practices. Will also propose policies and measures which UM can adopt in instances of systemic discrimination
4. liaise with special advisors on Sexual Harassment, and recommends appropriate policies and procedures
5. liaise with special advisors on Gender Identity and Expression Policy
6. Form part of the Equity Committee through the Chair(s)
7. establishes contact with individuals and organisations with similar objectives, in Malta and internationally, and to act as a focal point for the University of Malta on gender, sexual diversity and gender identity issues.

4. Contact Points

Anyone wishing further information should contact the chairperson by email at this address: gender@um.edu.mt

February 2023