



Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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Organization	KONERU LAKSHMAIAH EDUCATION FOUNDATION (Deemed to be University)
Issuing Authority	REGISTRAR KONERU LAKSHMAIAH EDUCATION FOUNDATION (Deemed to be University) Green Fields, Vaddeswaram – 522302 Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh, INDIA
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1. Preamble

Koneru Lakshmaiah Education Foundation (KLEF) recognizes that access to and participation in higher education and employment are fundamental to individual dignity, social mobility, and national development. An equitable, diverse, and inclusive academic environment enables individuals to overcome social, economic, and personal disadvantages and realize their full potential.

KLEF is committed to fostering a learning and working environment that is inclusive, respectful, and free from discrimination, harassment, or exclusion. This commitment applies to all members of the University community—students, faculty, staff, contractors, vendors, and visitors—irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, refugee or asylum status, socio-economic background, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Diversity and inclusion are central to KLEF’s core values of equity, social responsibility, self-esteem, empowerment, and mutual respect. These values guide all academic, administrative, cultural, and professional engagements of the University.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy is to:

- Affirm the University’s commitment to equality of opportunity and non-discrimination.
- Promote a culture that values diversity and fosters inclusion across all functions of the University.
- Ensure compliance with applicable national laws, regulations, and constitutional principles.
- Define responsibilities of all stakeholders in creating and sustaining an inclusive environment.
- Provide a framework for preventing, addressing, and redressing discrimination and harassment.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All students (undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, and exchange students)
- All employees (faculty, administrative staff, and support staff)
- Contractual staff, vendors, service providers, and consultants
- Visitors, collaborators, and external stakeholders engaged with the University.

4. Principles of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

KLEF upholds the following principles:

- **Equity:** Fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all, while striving to identify and eliminate barriers.
- **Diversity:** Recognition, respect, and valuing of individual differences.
- **Inclusion:** Creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected, supported, and able to participate fully.
- **Dignity at Work and Study:** Zero tolerance towards discrimination, harassment, bullying, or victimization.

5. Protected Characteristics and Inclusive Commitments

The University explicitly commits to inclusion and non-discrimination based on the following characteristics:

5.1 Age

KLEF values contributions from individuals of all age groups. No person shall be unfairly treated or disadvantaged due to age, subject to statutory requirements. Lifelong learning and intergenerational collaboration are actively encouraged.

5.2 Gender and Gender Identity

The University is committed to gender equality and the elimination of gender-based discrimination. This includes respect for all gender identities and expressions. Policies and practices promote gender balance, safety, dignity, and equal participation.

5.3 Disability

KLEF is committed to providing equal opportunities for people with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations, accessible infrastructure, assistive technologies, and academic or workplace support are provided to ensure full participation without stigma.

5.4 Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality

Discrimination because of race, ethnicity, ancestry, nationality, or geographical origin is prohibited. The University celebrates multiculturalism and promotes intercultural understanding.

5.5 Religion or Belief

KLEF respects freedom of thought, conscience, religion, and belief. Individuals are free to practice, express, or not practice any religion or belief, subject to lawful and respectful conduct.

5.6 Sexual Orientation

The University affirms the dignity and rights of individuals of all sexual orientations. Discrimination, harassment, or exclusion based on sexual orientation is not tolerated.

5.7 Marriage and Civil Partnership

No individual shall be treated unfairly due to marital status or civil partnership.

Employment and academic decisions are based solely on merit and institutional requirements.

5.8 Pregnancy and Maternity

KLEF provides a supportive environment for pregnant individuals and parents. Reasonable flexibility, leave provisions, and supportive measures are extended in accordance with law and institutional policies.

5.9 Refugees and Asylum Seekers

The University is committed to inclusive access and support for refugees and asylum seekers, in compliance with applicable laws, ensuring dignity, respect, and fair opportunity in education and employment.

6. General Guidelines

- All admissions, recruitment, assessment, promotion, and engagement decisions are based solely on merit, qualifications, competence, and institutional needs.
- The University ensures a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment free from discrimination and harassment.
- Regular sensitization, awareness, and capacity-building programs on EDI are conducted.
- Adequate academic, psychological, and social support systems are provided, including mentoring and counseling.
- No retaliation shall be permitted against individuals who raise concerns or complaints in good faith.

7. Institutional Interventions

7.1 EDI Committee

An Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee is constituted to coordinate, monitor, and oversee implementation of this Policy and related initiatives.

7.2 Specialized Cells and Support Structures

- Women's Cell
- Grievance Redressal Cell
- Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Committees
- Student Counseling and Mentoring Systems

7.3 Awareness and Engagement

- Gender sensitization and diversity awareness programs
- Inclusive co-curricular and extracurricular activities
- Training programs for faculty and staff

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 University Management

- Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory obligations.
- Provide leadership and resources for EDI initiatives.
- Review and update policies periodically.

8.2 Heads of Departments and Managers

- Implement fair and inclusive practices in recruitment, evaluation, and development.
- Foster inclusive departmental cultures
- Address concerns promptly and responsibly.

8.3 Human Resources Department

- Support equitable recruitment, development, and grievance processes.
- Function as EDI ambassadors and facilitators.

8.4 Students and Employees

- Uphold the values and principles of this Policy.
- Contribute to a respectful and inclusive campus environment.

9. Breach of Policy

Any breach of this Policy by students, employees, contractors, or visitors will be taken seriously and investigated promptly. Appropriate disciplinary or corrective action will be taken in accordance with applicable rules and procedures.

- Align this explicitly with **UGC / GoI / Supreme Court directions** (including LGBTQIA+ jurisprudence).
- Create a **one-page EDI Policy summary** for the website.
- Map this policy to **NAAC criteria, IQAC processes, or grievance redressal SOPs**.
- Convert this into a **Board/EC approval format** or **policy notification circular**.

Just tell me how you plan to use it.

Registrar