

# PARUL UNIVERSITY

R/Notification-PEDI/04/2024-25

Office of the Registrar  
June 15, 2024

## NOTIFICATION

**Sub: Policy for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

**Ref: (i) Orders of the President**

### 1. Preamble

Parul University is committed to fostering a vibrant, safe, respectful and inclusive community that values the dignity, rights and diversity of all its members. As a socially responsible university, Parul University seeks to promote equitable opportunities across its academic, research, employment, administrative and campus-life functions.

The University believes that equality, diversity and inclusion strengthen learning, teaching, research, innovation, decision-making and institutional excellence. Through this Policy, the University affirms its commitment to maintaining a working, learning and living environment in which all individuals are treated with fairness, respect and dignity, and are able to reach their fullest potential.

### 2. Purpose

This Policy sets out the University's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and establishes the broad principles to:

- prevent discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation/retaliation;
- promote equal opportunity, fair access and inclusive participation;
- support a safe and respectful environment for students, employees and other stakeholders; and
- guide implementation, accountability, monitoring and continuous improvement in EDI practices.

### 3. Scope

This Policy applies, as relevant, to:

- all students;
- applicants for admission;
- faculty, staff and employees of the University;
- contractual staff, temporary staff, interns, fellows and volunteers;
- consultants, vendors, service providers, contractors and agency personnel working with or on behalf of the University;
- visitors, guests and participants in University programmes, events, activities, placements and outreach initiatives.

This Policy applies to conduct occurring:

- on campus;
- in classrooms, laboratories, offices, residences, clinical or field settings;
- during University-related travel, meetings, events, internships, placements and community engagements;
- through digital, online or social-media interactions connected with the University.

#### 4. Policy Statement

Parul University does not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, exclusion or victimisation/retaliation in any form.

The University shall strive to ensure fairness and inclusion in admissions, employment, academics, research, assessment, access to facilities, student support, leadership opportunities, campus engagement and service delivery.

This Policy shall be implemented in accordance with applicable law, regulatory requirements, University statutes, ordinances, service rules, academic regulations and approved institutional procedures. Nothing in this Policy shall invalidate lawful eligibility criteria, statutory reservations, professional requirements or regulatory mandates.

#### 5. Protected Characteristics and Inclusion Commitments

The University is committed to promoting equality and inclusion and to preventing discrimination on grounds including, but not limited to:

- age;
- sex and gender;
- gender identity or gender expression;
- sexual orientation;
- disability;
- race, ethnicity, caste, colour, nationality or national origin;
- religion, belief or no belief;
- language;
- marital status or legally recognised partnership status, as applicable;
- pregnancy, maternity, paternity, adoption, parental or caregiving status;
- socio-economic background; and
- refugee, asylum-seeker or migration status, where applicable and lawful.

The University also recognises that individuals may face disadvantage on multiple and intersecting grounds, and shall promote an inclusive approach in policy implementation and decision-making.

#### 6. Objectives

The following are the main objectives of this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy:

- **Promote equal access:** Parul University will encourage equitable access to opportunities, resources, facilities, support systems and educational programmes.
- **Recruitment:** Parul University is committed to being an equal opportunity employer and to encouraging fair, merit-based and inclusive recruitment, progression and professional development processes.
- **Admissions:** Parul University will promote EDI in admissions, student life and academic engagement, while adhering to applicable admission criteria, statutory requirements and academic standards.
- **Provide a safe and respectful environment:** Parul University shall endeavour to provide a safe, secure and respectful environment that supports a positive learning and working experience for all.
- **Empower individuals:** Parul University will provide mechanisms, information and support to enable individuals to report, address and seek assistance in relation to discrimination, harassment, bullying or exclusion.

- **Provide resources and support services:** Parul University shall seek to provide or facilitate access to relevant support services, which may include disability support, counselling, mentoring, faith-related support, student support and other inclusion-related assistance, as feasible and approved by the University.
- **Academic support services:** The University shall support continued access, as appropriate, to academic support services such as tutoring, academic assistance, counselling and disability-related support, including for students facing temporary or long-term barriers to participation.
- **Pregnancy, parenthood and caregiving support:** The University shall provide leave, accommodations and related support in accordance with applicable law and approved University policies, so that eligible students and employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, parenthood or caregiving responsibilities are treated fairly and with dignity.
- **Freedom of religion and belief:** Parul University shall not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of religion, belief or no belief, and shall endeavour to support equal participation in University life in a manner consistent with law, academic functioning and institutional requirements.
- **Dependent benefits and support schemes:** Where the University provides dependent benefits, support schemes or related facilities, eligibility criteria shall be clearly defined and applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with approved rules and applicable law.
- **Continuously monitor and improve:** Parul University will periodically review its EDI efforts, gather feedback and, where appropriate, strengthen institutional practices, support systems and awareness initiatives.

## 7. Policy Guidelines

### 7.1. Recruitment and Selection

Parul University shall use fair and unbiased recruitment and selection procedures and shall seek to:

- attract a diverse pool of qualified applicants;
- use clear, job-relevant and objective criteria;
- reduce the risk of unconscious bias in evaluation and selection; and
- promote fair access to induction, training, mentoring and career development.

Employment-related decisions shall be based on merit, role requirements, performance, conduct and applicable institutional rules, and shall not be influenced by prohibited discrimination.

### 7.2. Accessibility and Inclusion

Parul University shall endeavour to promote accessibility in physical spaces, communication channels, academic processes and technology resources.

Subject to feasibility, approved processes and applicable rules, the University may provide reasonable accommodations or support measures, including for persons with disabilities or those facing documented barriers to participation.

The University shall also encourage inclusive meeting practices, accessible communication and support services for differently abled persons.

### 7.3. EDI Training and Awareness

To deepen understanding of EDI principles and responsibilities, the University shall promote appropriate training, sensitisation and awareness initiatives for faculty, staff and students.

These may include:

- orientation and awareness programmes;
- anti-discrimination and anti-harassment sensitisation;
- inclusion and accessibility awareness;
- unconscious bias awareness;
- leadership and committee sensitisation; and
- communication on dignity, respect and responsible digital conduct.

## **8. Prohibited Conduct**

The following conduct is prohibited under this Policy:

- direct or indirect discrimination;
- harassment, including verbal, non-verbal, written, visual, digital or physical harassment;
- bullying, intimidation or hostile behaviour;
- exclusionary behaviour or denial of access on prohibited grounds;
- victimisation or retaliation against a person who raises a concern, makes a complaint, provides information, participates in an inquiry, or supports another person in good faith; and
- instructing, aiding or encouraging another person to engage in prohibited conduct.

A malicious or knowingly false complaint may be addressed under applicable disciplinary or conduct procedures. However, a complaint made in good faith shall not attract adverse action merely because it is not substantiated.

## **9. Reporting, Support and Resolution**

Any person covered by this Policy who believes they have experienced, witnessed or been affected by conduct inconsistent with this Policy may raise a concern through appropriate University channels.

The University shall endeavour to:

- provide accessible reporting routes;
- guide individuals on available support options;
- handle complaints in a fair, sensitive and timely manner;
- maintain confidentiality to the extent reasonably possible and subject to legal or procedural requirements; and
- take appropriate corrective, preventive or disciplinary action where warranted under applicable procedures.

This Policy shall be read together with related University mechanisms and policies, including those relating to harassment, sexual harassment, grievance redressal, student discipline, staff conduct, disability/access support, admissions and leave, as applicable.

## **10. Non-Retaliation**

Parul University strictly prohibits retaliation, victimisation or adverse treatment against any person who, in good faith:

- raises a concern or complaint under this Policy;
- reports suspected discrimination, harassment or exclusion;
- participates in an inquiry, review or investigation; or
- supports another person in exercising rights under this Policy.

Any retaliation shall itself be treated as a serious matter and may result in appropriate action under applicable University rules and procedures.

## **11. Implementation and Oversight**

University Administration shall be responsible for overall oversight, implementation support and institutional promotion of this Policy through relevant offices, committees and departments notified from time to time.

### **Heads of Departments, Units and Offices shall**

- support day-to-day implementation within their areas;
- promote respectful and inclusive working and learning environments;
- respond appropriately to concerns raised before them; and
- support awareness, compliance and corrective action where required.

### **Faculty, staff and students are expected to**

- treat others with dignity, respect and fairness;
- refrain from prohibited conduct;
- cooperate with awareness and implementation efforts;
- raise concerns responsibly and in good faith; and
- contribute to an inclusive and respectful campus culture.

## **12. Monitoring and Review**

The University will periodically assess the effectiveness and applicability of the Policy and track the development of its EDI activities by:

- regularly collecting and reviewing relevant diversity and inclusion data, where appropriate and lawful;
- conducting surveys, feedback exercises or consultations to assess the inclusiveness of the environment;
- reviewing complaint trends, support usage and awareness efforts; and
- revising EDI policies and practices based on evidence, feedback, legal developments and institutional priorities.

## **13. Interpretation**

This Policy is intended to provide the University's EDI framework and guiding commitments. It shall be interpreted in harmony with applicable law and approved University rules. In case of conflict, the applicable law, regulatory requirement or formally approved University rule or procedure shall prevail.

This Policy does not, by itself, create any entitlement beyond what is provided under applicable law or specific University rules, schemes, contracts or regulations.

By Order



Registrar

To,

- 1) Dean, Doctoral Studies and Research
- 2) Deans of Faculties
- 3) Principals/Directors of Colleges/ Institutes
- 4) Director (IQAC)
- 5) Managing Director (Global), Industrial Collaborations; Academic Strategies
- 6) Academic Directors
- 7) Dean, Students' Welfare
- 8) Controller of Examinations
- 9) Chief Librarian
- 10) Director, CDC / PIERC / CIRR / OIA/ AFMC / RDC/ Marketing / CDOE/ EDP / CEC / Alumni Association / Events Cell / Centre for Human Resources Development/ Security/ Physical Education and Sports/ Internship Cell/ Staff and Students Welfare Cell/ ICT Cell/ Learning and Academic Enrichment/ Faculty Updation (CSE/IT/CA)/ CMIE/ Partnerships (Institutes of National Importance)/ SCOPE
- 11) Chief Finance and Accounts Officer
- 12) Central Administration
- 13) Accounts Section
- 14) Students' Section
- 15) Head, Central Administration / Accounts / Purchase/ Transport/ MIS / Students' Section

**Submitted to,**

1. The President
2. Dr.Parul Patel, Vice President (Student Affairs and General Administration) and Chairperson, Admissions Committee, Parul University
3. Dr. Geetika Madan Patel, Vice President (Quality, Research and Health Sciences), Parul University
4. Dr. Komal Patel, Vice President (Medical and Paramedical Sciences), Parul University
5. The Provost