

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY

Preamble

The University of Guelph is committed to equity in employment. The University believes that the excellence the institution is known for will be enhanced by increasing the diversity of its faculty and staff. The University also believes it is in the best interest of its community that the faculty, staff and students have the opportunity to learn, work and live with people who, because of their background, can bring new and varied perspectives to academic endeavour and community life. To this end, the University is dedicated to the removal of all systemic barriers; the elimination of discrimination and harassment; and to the promotion of employment equity. In formulating this policy, the University of Guelph recognizes it is the law in Ontario that:

“Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to employment without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, same-sex partnership status or disability.” (*Ontario Human Rights Code*, Section 5(1), 2002)

Furthermore, the University is a federal contractor and complies with the Federal Contractors Program, which requires organizations to institute employment equity plans. According to the federal *Employment Equity Act*, Section 2, 1996:

“The purpose of the act is to achieve equality in the workplace so that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability and, in the fulfilment of that goal, to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by (the four designated groups) women, Aboriginal Peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities by giving effect to the principle that employment equity means more than treating persons in the same way but also requires special measures and the accommodation of differences.”

Employment inequities constitute obstacles both to the attainment of institutional goals and to the maintenance of constructive employee-employer relations.

The University on an ongoing basis adopts and implements employment equity strategies to identify and remove barriers to equity. In consultation with its employee groups, the University has developed an employment equity plan that will serve, within practical limits, the career development goals of employees. The plan is designed to eliminate discriminatory barriers that interfere with employment options and to promote access for all current and prospective employees to the fullest opportunity to exercise individual potential. For current employees, the University’s commitment to equal opportunity in employment includes access to preparation and opportunities for transfer, promotion and advancement within the University.

Employment equity will be achieved when employees receive employment opportunities and benefits solely on the basis of relevant abilities. Employment equity initiatives will both increase the pool of

candidates highly qualified for University employment and ensure recognition and development of the abilities of current employees.

Objectives:

- i) To regard relevant individual ability and achievement as the prime criteria for the treatment of current employees and the recruitment of prospective employees.
- ii) To ensure that all current and prospective employees are encouraged to develop their abilities and aspirations without being subject to discrimination based on grounds protected by the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and without barriers that may result, however unintentionally, from inequitable policies, procedures, practices and attitudes.
- iii) To ensure that the representation of women, members of visible minorities, persons with disabilities and Aboriginal Peoples within the University's employment categories and job levels reflects the representation of those groups among individuals qualified to undertake such employment.

These objectives are directed at enabling the University to strive for excellence and to sustain excellence when it is achieved.

Implementation:

The University will take the following steps to act on its commitment:

- communicate this policy, and programs and procedures developed under it, to all University employees, including supervisory and managerial personnel, who will be responsible for its implementation;
- develop and implement an employment equity plan that includes both quantitative and qualitative measures to address inequities revealed by analysis of workforce data and an employment systems review. The plan will include measures to enhance the climate for equity;
- develop and implement an employment equity program pursuant to which candidates for employment may self-identify during the application process;
- monitor the implementation of the employment equity plan and review and revise it as necessary;
- foster and endorse attitudes and behaviour that advance employment equity.

The University is sensitive and attentive to the issue of employment equity for all those covered by the Ontario Human Rights Code and who are historically disadvantaged in employment. The University

also has the responsibility to address the disadvantages in employment faced by members of the four employment equity designated groups: women, members of visible minorities, persons with disabilities and Aboriginal Peoples.

Initiatives:

Without diluting its commitment to individual ability and achievement as the prime criteria, the University will undertake a number of positive initiatives in the short term and over the long term to enhance and diversify the participation of women, members of visible minorities, persons with disabilities and Aboriginal Peoples as University employees. In doing so, the University will act on Section 14(1) of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, which states that the equality rights defined above are:

“not infringed by the implementation of a special program designed to relieve hardship or economic disadvantage or to assist disadvantaged persons or groups to achieve or attempt to achieve equal opportunity or that is likely to contribute to the elimination of the infringement of (those) rights.”

These special measures will include:

- determination of the representation of women, members of visible minorities, persons with disabilities and Aboriginal Peoples within the University’s workforce;
- development of new opportunities to assist qualified members of those designated groups within the University’s workforce to compete on equitable terms for available positions;
- active recruitment to enlarge the pool of women, members of visible minorities, persons with disabilities and Aboriginal Peoples as candidates for employment and for promotion into employment levels and categories where they are currently under-represented;
- development of measures to address equitable access to opportunities and a favourable climate in the work environment;
- establishment of mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of the University’s employment equity program, policies and practices.

The University will measure progress towards approved goals consistent with the spirit of this policy. The results of initiatives undertaken pursuant to the above will be documented and reported to the University community on a regular basis.

For more information about the University of Guelph’s employment equity policy, call the Human Rights and Equity Office at 519-824-4120, Ext. 53000

Approved August 2003, reprinted 2007

