



Centurion
UNIVERSITY

Shaping Lives...

Empowering Communities...

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY 2024

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CENTURION UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT
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FOREWORD



At Centurion University of Technology and Management, we are proud to uphold the values of fairness, inclusivity, and respect. Our *Equal Opportunity Policy* is a reflection of our unwavering commitment to providing an environment where everyone, regardless of background, can thrive and succeed.

This policy ensures that all members of our university community—students, faculty, and staff—are treated equitably, free from discrimination or bias. We believe that diversity is one of our greatest strengths, and by embracing different perspectives, experiences, and talents, we enrich our academic culture and foster innovation.

The *Equal Opportunity Policy* sets out clear guidelines that promote fairness in admissions, recruitment, and all university activities. It highlights our dedication to merit-based opportunities, ensuring that everyone has the chance to grow and contribute to our shared mission of excellence in education, research, and service to society.

The university encourages every member of the Centurion University family to actively engage with this policy and to play a part in making the campus a welcoming, inclusive space for all. Together, we can create an environment where everyone is empowered to achieve their full potential.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Supriya Pattanayak".

Prof. (Dr.) Supriya Pattanayak
Vice-Chancellor
Centurion University of Technology and Management

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Equal Opportunity Policy

Preamble

India is a country with lots of diversity and also inequalities. Hence it is important to have proper policies & institutional mechanisms to promote inclusive growth. With this in mind, it is proposed to establish a nodal cell for creative interaction & promotion of equality among all the stakeholders of the society; mainly the students, staff, and faculty of the University. It is an effort to educate, counsel & empower the nation builders to realize their potential & bring them to the mainstream of society; which will enable them to contribute to the workplace, community & the nation at large. The basic aim of the cell is to ensure that persons (students, staff, faculty, and the community) from various diverse backgrounds of community, religion, region, gender or ability are not deprived of their rightful opportunities.

They will have access to all the resources, to promote inclusivity and harmony.

1. Objective

- To promote diversity and inclusive practices among the different stakeholders i.e. students and employees irrespective of caste, creed, religion, gender, language, region, age, income, etc.
- To raise awareness regarding issues amongst the stakeholders and to create an enabling and non-discriminative environment for the disadvantaged groups in the institution so as to provide equal and adequate opportunities to all.
- To have a dedicated Committee to foresee the challenges faced by the different disadvantaged groups.
- To ensure implementation of policies, schemes and programmes for inclusion of disadvantaged groups within the frameworks of the policies and guidelines of the UGC/GoI/GoO.

2. Policy Statement

- The University is committed to promoting diversity and equal opportunities in academic pursuit and employment, and to eliminating any form of discrimination or harassment against staff, students, and other persons who have dealings with the university. Everyone, irrespective of their race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other

opinion, national or social origin, has the right to be respected and be treated fairly. Mutual respect and fair treatment are conducive to the creation of a diverse and harmonious learning and working environment. While recognizing that promoting diversity and equal opportunities can enable staff and students to achieve their full potential, we take proactive steps to advocate an equal opportunities campus.

- The University has zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment. We require all its employees, especially those who hold pedagogic, supervisory or evaluative responsibility, to strictly observe professional conduct at all times and declare a conflict of interest where appropriate. They have to take all necessary steps to ensure that any member, employee or student of the University, or any other person who has dealings with the University is not subject to any discrimination or harassment.
- Higher Education is available to all sections of society and the University believes it has a duty to ensure that its full range of educational provision is accessible to all members of the community. Applications will be actively encouraged and welcomed from all those seeking to undertake a University course of study.
- The University is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity within a diverse environment for all its employees, and will ensure that its policies and procedures are equally applied to all staff. Appropriate monitoring of activities is undertaken, ensuring the development of related policies and practices, and the equal and fair treatment of such individuals. The University's Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy will apply to all those seeking employment with the University.

3. Responsibilities

The Vice-Chancellor and senior management have responsibility under this Policy for endorsing strategies, frameworks, and plans that promote equal opportunity and enhance an inclusive, non-discriminatory environment. The Vice-Chancellor is assisted by the senior executive team. All members of the University Community have a responsibility to work individually and collectively to achieve a work and study environment in which equal opportunity is fostered. This will assist the university to achieve equal opportunity in employment and education.

4. Definitions

- **Equal Opportunity** means fairly treating staff and students. Fair treatment is:
 - Treating people as individuals without making judgments based on irrelevant personal characteristics
 - Creating a work environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimization
 - Allowing all members of the University Community to work and participate to their full potential
 - Making decisions based on merit.

- **The University Community** means staff, students, volunteers, visitors, titleholders, contractors, and consultants at campuses, sites, and centres of the University of Adelaide are members of the University Community for the purposes of the Policy.

- **Discrimination** means treating or proposing to treat an individual unfavourably because of their particular personal characteristics (e.g. ethnicity, place of origin, language and culture) or because they belong to a certain group (e.g. socio- economic status).

Discrimination can be direct or indirect:

- Direct discrimination can occur when a person or group is treated less favorably than another person or group in a similar situation because of a particular characteristic.
 - Indirect discrimination involves imposing a requirement, condition, or practice that operates to disadvantage a person or group with a particular characteristic and that is not reasonable.
-
- **Unlawful Discrimination** includes unfair treatment of a person in areas of public life on the basis of the following characteristics: age, association with a child, caring responsibilities, gender identity, disability, marital or domestic partnership status, pregnancy, race, religion, religious appearance or dress (in work or study), sex, sexual

orientation, or spouse or domestic partner's identity. Sexual harassment, bullying or victimization including of a person who is a whistle-blower is also unlawful.

- **Gender Equity** involves ensuring fairness and impartiality towards individuals irrespective of their gender. Achieving gender equity often necessitates implementing measures that mitigate historical and social disadvantages linked to gender within specific contexts.
- **Unconscious bias** refers to biases that individuals may hold towards others or groups without being consciously aware of them.
- **Harassment** is unwelcome conduct that might reasonably cause a person to be offended, humiliated, or intimidated because they have a particular attribute. Harassment can also occur if someone is working in a 'hostile' or intimidating environment. The behaviors can be overt or subtle, verbal, non-verbal or physical.
- **Victimization** means unfairly treating people for complaining or helping others to complain, either within the University, to the Equal Opportunity Cell or to another external agency. Unlawful victimization is unfair treatment for complaints about discrimination or sexual harassment.
- **Divyangjan**, as defined by the RPWD Act 2016, refers to individuals with long-term physical, intellectual, or mental impairments that limit their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.
- **Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs)** are those who, due to historical and ongoing social, economic, educational, vocational, and locational disadvantages, lack equal access to higher education facilities and opportunities.
- **Economically Weaker Section (EWS)** includes individuals not covered under SC/ST/OBC reservations, with a gross annual income below Rs. 8 lakhs in the financial year preceding their application for admission or recruitment.

- **Other Backward Classes (OBC)** refers to socially and educationally disadvantaged citizens, as identified and listed by the Central or State Governments.
- **Persons with Disabilities** are individuals with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that, when interacting with barriers, impede their full and equal participation in society, as defined by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
- **Persons with Benchmark Disabilities** are those with at least 40% of a specified disability, whether defined in measurable terms or not, as certified by the appropriate authority.
- **Scheduled Castes** are those notified under Article 341 of the Indian Constitution.
- **Scheduled Tribes** are those notified under Article 342 of the Indian Constitution.

5. Categories under Equal Opportunity

5.1. Gender Equality

The University aims to achieve gender equality across its educational, professional, and research operations. This includes addressing biases in attitudes, practices, and structures to ensure equitable access, participation, and advancement for individuals of all genders.

The commitment of the University in implementing the gender equality will include the following:

- To strive to achieve **50% representation of women** in the University's bodies such as the board of governors, senior functionaries of the institute, faculty, staff, and students.
- Attempt to create an **enabling environment** considering the specific needs of women faculty and staff such as creche facility, flexible timing, and transport arrangements during late hours.
- Ensure **mandatory attendance** of all faculty and staff, and students at gender sensitization workshops.
- Ensure that during the **induction programme** of new faculty and students in the University, sessions on gender sensitization have to be provided.
- Display appropriate **posters on gender sensitization** in different parts of the University.
- **Gather and use information** on how the University's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services.

- Attempt to link the policy with other elements of the system so that it operates as an integrated whole.
- **Consult stakeholders (i.e. employees, service users, and others) and take account of relevant information** in order to determine its gender equality objectives.
- **Assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices** on gender equality.
- **Implement the actions set out in the policy** within a year, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.
- Ensuring equal opportunity for all students, staff, and officers, regardless of gender, to access, participate in, and contribute to all aspects of their learning and working experience at the University, and to **receive equitable recognition and rewards for their efforts.**

All members of the University community are tasked with advancing gender equity throughout the learning and working environments. Specifically, staff members are responsible for delivering services and conducting operations with a commitment to eliminating gender inequity and unconscious bias.

5.2. LGBTQIA+

LGBTQIA+ is an umbrella term used to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual. LGBTQIA+ people represent a subset of individuals among the broader category of sexual and gender diverse individuals. Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) are diverse and spans cultures across the world. LGBTQIA+ university students experience a range of barriers that can lead to isolation, poor mental and physical health, low attainment and, in some cases, dropping out altogether. Hence, University puts effort towards this community through this equal opportunity policy adhering to the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 and the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020.

This discourages any discrimination in the following prospects:

Admissions, student accommodation, overall wellness and medical support, Extracurricular activities, Anti-bullying and harassment policies for protection of students.

The university advocates for "Inclusive Education," ensuring that transgender students participate in learning environments free from discrimination, neglect, harassment, or intimidation.

The university adheres to a policy of non-discrimination against transgender individuals in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, promotion, and related matters.

Legislative Compliance - Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019: The university complies with Section 6 of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, ensuring that no citizen of India is denied office, membership, appointment, admission to any degree, diploma, certificate, or other academic distinction on the basis of sex, race, creed, class, caste, place of birth, religious belief, profession, or political opinion.

5.3. Divyangjan

The 2016 Act on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities prohibits discrimination against people with physical and mental disabilities. The Centurion University of Technology and Management prohibits discrimination in any form, including that based on a person's disability. The university is committed to cultivating a diverse, harassment-free, and non-discriminatory learning and working environment that promotes equal opportunities for all.

The term "disability" encompasses both motor and sensory limitations (e.g., mobility, vision, or hearing impairments). It also includes disabilities caused by chronic illnesses and syndromes, as well as invisible disabilities like psychological and emotional disorders, learning disabilities, heart disease, asthma, epilepsy, Acquired Brain Injuries (ABI), and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Because many disabilities vary in severity and type of limitation, accommodations must also vary and be tailored to the individual's needs.

The university shall facilitate higher education for differently-abled persons in every stream with the necessary aids and appliances for higher education.

- Barrier-free environment for the orthopedically handicapped
- Facility for the orthopedically handicapped to use an entry to the college that is free of steps.
- Lift facility available for the orthopedically handicapped.
- Physical Mobility Aid using E-Vehicles.
- Disabled-friendly washrooms.
- No queue policy at all counters of the administrative office and library.
- Separate seating arrangements for in house as well as outsider-disabled students using scribes during examinations.
- Assistance to get scribes during examination.
- Provision for extra time for eligible students during examinations.
- Assistive technologies which include Recognition Software, Conversion Software, Assistive Listening Software, and Visual/Audio Aids for special need students.
- Counselling facilities for students with special learning needs.

The University's admission policy provides a 3% reservation for people with disabilities in all of the University's courses. The University will ensure that all types of disabilities are represented, as listed in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016 and as government regulations alter.

5.4. Socio- Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs)

Ensuring quality education for all is a global challenge. In India, disadvantaged groups like women, minorities, SCs, STs, OBCs, PwDs, and EWSs often lag in education. The Indian government's primary goal is inclusive national development, as highlighted in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The NEP 2020 focuses on addressing the educational challenges faced by Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) due to socio-cultural, economic, and historical factors, emphasizing their increased participation in higher education. The NEP 2020 has indicated people with the following identities as Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SDGs):

(i) Gender Identity:

- Female (Girls and Women makeup about half of all SEDGs and, in particular, those belonging to underrepresented groups have multiple disadvantages)
- Transgender.

(ii) Social Backwardness Identity:

- Scheduled Castes (SCs)
- Scheduled Tribes (STs)

(iii) Educational and Economic Backward Identity:

- Non-Creamy Layer among Other Backward Classes (OBCs)
- Economically Weaker Sections (EWSs)
- Students from the vernacular medium schools
- First Generation Learners

(iv) Minority Identity:

- Religious Minorities
- Linguistic Minorities

(v) Persons with Disabilities and Benchmark Disabilities.

- A person with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment,
- A person with not less than forty percent of a specified disability as certified by the certifying authority.

(vi) Vulnerable and Low Socio-economic conditions:

- Migrant communities, Denotified and Nomadic Tribes
- Low-income households Below the Poverty Line (BPL)
- Child beggars and Children in vulnerable situations
- Victims of or Children of victims of trafficking
- Students who lost their parents
- Any other group of low socio-economic conditions

(vii) Less-developed, poor-access, and disadvantaged locations:

- Villages and towns
- Tribal Areas /Scheduled Areas as mentioned in the V and VI Schedule under the Constitution of India
- Slums
- Aspirational Areas with Special Educational Zones (SEZs)
- North East States
- Islands
- Conflict Prone Areas
- Disaster-prone areas, including flood, drought, earthquake, etc.
- Border Areas

The University is committed to achieving the goals of NEP 2020 to effectively address the challenges related to Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG-4 (quality education), SDG-5 (gender equality), SDG-1 (no poverty), and SDG-8 (decent work and economic growth).

The university aims to:

- Enhance equitable access to quality education for SEDGs through bridge courses, earn-while-learn programs, and outreach initiatives.
- Provide and ensure basic facilities and amenities for SEDGs to create inclusive, healthy, safe, and secure campus environments.
- Establish SEDG cells to sensitize stakeholders, implement policies, monitor progress, ensure equal access to quality higher education, uphold dignity, promote egalitarian values, and address grievances in HEIs.

Governance of SEDGs Cell:

- I. Chairperson SEDGs Cell
- II. Senior Professor
- III. In-charge of Internal Complaint Committee Member
- IV. Coordinator/Director of IQAC Member
- V. SC/ST Representative Member

- VI. OBC Representative Member
- VII. Two student representatives belonging to SEDG members (one male and one female member)
- VIII. Assistant Registrar/ Administrative Officer Member Secretary

* Chairperson and members to be nominated by the Head of the HEI.

Also the university is committed:

- To look after implementation of reservation policy for SCs/STs/OBCs/PwDs in the University.
- To take such follow-up measures for achieving the objectives and targets laid down by the Government of India for the above purpose.

The University adopts the reservation policy as per Govt. of India norms i.e. 15% for Scheduled Castes, 7.5% for Scheduled Tribes and 27% for Other Backward Classes

6. Approval and Review

This policy has been approved by the university administration and will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with current laws and best practices. Any amendments to the policy will be communicated to the university community.



Dr. Anita Patra
Registrar
Centurion University of Technology and Management



7. References

1. [https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/bills_parliament/2019/The%20Transgender%20Persons%20\(Protection%20of%20Rights\)%20Act,%202019.pdf](https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/bills_parliament/2019/The%20Transgender%20Persons%20(Protection%20of%20Rights)%20Act,%202019.pdf)
2. https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/3987733_UCG-Letter-Gazette-Right-of-PWD.pdf
3. https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/6320608_reservation-Policy.pdf
4. https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/2540260_SEDGs-Guidelines.pdf



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UNIVERSITY

*Shaping Lives...
Empowering Communities...*

CENTURION UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT, ODISHA

CAMPUSES:

Paralakhemundi Campus

Village Alluri Nagar
P.O. – R Sitapur, Via- Uppalada
Paralakhemundi, Dist.- Gajapati
Odisha, India. PIN– 761211

Bhubaneswar Campus

Ramchandrapur
P.O. – Jatni, Bhubaneswar
Dist.- Khurda, Odisha,
India, PIN– 752050

Balangir Campus

Behind BSNL Office
IDCO land, Rajib Nagar
Dist.- Balangir, Odisha
India, PIN-767001

Rayagada Campus

IDCO Industrial Area
Pitamahal, Rayagada
Dist.-Rayagada, Odisha
India, PIN-765001

Balasore Campus

Gopalpur,
P.O.-Balasore
Dist.-Balasore, Odisha
India, PIN-756044

Chatrapur Campus

Ramchandrapur,
Kaliabali Chhak,
P.O-Chatrapur, Dist.-Ganjam
Odisha, India, PIN-761020