



Employee Rights Policy

Equator University of Science and Technology

Preamble

Equator University of Science and Technology (EQUaT) is dedicated to fostering a fair, inclusive, and supportive workplace. This policy establishes principles and procedures that ensure fair compensation, safeguard labour rights, prevent discrimination and modern slavery, and promote professional development across the institution.

Definitions

Decent Work: The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines Decent Work as productive employment that provides fair income, workplace security, social protection, equal opportunity, and freedom for workers to participate in decisions affecting their lives.

Equal Opportunity: The principle of non-discrimination in hiring, promotion, and compensation based on gender, race, religion, disability, or other status.

Professional Development: Continuous learning opportunities aimed at enhancing employee skills and career growth.

Work-Life Balance: Institutional support that allows employees to balance professional responsibilities with personal well-being.

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS): Standards and practices that ensure a safe and healthy work environment for all staff.

Decent Work and Economic Growth

Introduction

Equator University of Science and Technology (EQUaT) is committed to promoting fair employment practices and decent work as part of its dedication to sustainable development. This policy ensures fair compensation, safeguarding labour rights, and fostering inclusive and equitable employment practices across the institution. It includes commitments to provide at least a living wage, eliminate workplace discrimination, prevent modern slavery, promote gender pay equity, recognize unions, and guarantee transparent grievance and appeal processes.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to ensure access to productive employment and equal opportunities for all staff and faculty at the University.

Objectives

- Uphold international labour standards and comply with all applicable national employment laws.
- Provide fair, transparent, and competitive compensation aligned with the living wage to guarantee decent livelihoods. All staff and faculty shall be paid at least the living wage, defined by the local poverty indicator for a family of four, expressed as an hourly wage.
- Safeguard employees' rights by prohibiting forced labour, child labour, modern slavery, and human trafficking across all institutional operations and supply chains.
- Guarantee equivalent rights and protections for outsourced workers and third-party service providers, including fair wages and safe working conditions.
- Promote pay equity and regularly measure and track gender pay gaps to ensure fairness and accountability.
- Establish clear and transparent appeal and grievance processes for employees to raise concerns related to rights, pay, and workplace conditions.
- Recognise and protect core labour rights, including freedom of association, union representation, and collective bargaining, for all employees, including women and international staff.
- Support continuous professional and career development to build employee skills and capabilities.
- Safeguard employees' physical, emotional, and psychological well-being by maintaining a healthy and safe workplace.
- Foster a culture of respect, inclusivity, and collaboration.
- Encourage employee engagement and participation in decision-making at all levels.

- Monitor employment practices and regularly evaluate performance to ensure accountability, compliance, and continuous improvement.

Philosophy in Relation to the Policy

EQUaT advances economic growth, innovation, and social justice by empowering employees. This philosophy emphasizes dignity, fairness, and shared prosperity through fair compensation, equal opportunity, and protection against discrimination and modern slavery. It further promotes equity by ensuring gender pay tracking, safeguarding labour rights such as freedom of association and collective bargaining, and extending fair treatment to outsourced workers. In this way, university growth positively impacts staff, students, and stakeholders while upholding international labour standards.

Guiding Principles

- The University shall ensure that all employment practices are based on fairness, merit, and inclusivity, without discrimination based on gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, disability, refugee status, or any other status.
- All employees shall receive fair, transparent, and competitive remuneration and benefits in accordance with their roles, responsibilities, and market standards. No employee shall receive a salary below the defined living wage standard, ensuring economic security for all categories of staff.
- The University shall maintain a working environment that ensures the physical, emotional, and psychological safety and well-being of all employees in accordance with occupational health and safety standards.
- Employees shall be given opportunities to participate in decision-making processes, leadership development, and initiatives that promote institutional advancement.
- The University shall respect the rights of employees to freely join or form unions, staff associations, or representative groups of their choice, and to engage in constructive dialogue with management. Union recognition and participation shall apply equally to all categories of staff, including women and international employees, without discrimination.
- Institutional operations, communication, and decision-making shall be conducted in an open and accountable manner, ensuring that all employees are informed and responsible in their conduct.
- The University shall support flexible work arrangements and promote the well-being of employees by recognizing the importance of balancing professional responsibilities with personal and family life.
- Employees shall have access to ongoing learning opportunities, including training, workshops, professional development, and academic advancement to enhance their skills and performance.

- EQUaT shall uphold a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of workplace harassment and shall ensure the establishment of confidential reporting and redress mechanisms.
- The University shall maintain a zero-tolerance stance against forced labour, modern slavery, child labour, and human trafficking in all its operations and supply chains.
- All institutional practices and employee conduct shall adhere to national labour laws, university regulations, and ethical standards.
- The University shall ensure that outsourced workers and third-party service providers are afforded equivalent rights and protections as directly employed staff.
- Employment practices shall incorporate sustainability principles, encourage eco-conscious decision-making, and align human resource operations with environmental and social responsibility goals.
- The University recognises and protects fundamental labour rights, including freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, and protection from retaliation.

Accessibility

Equator University of Science and Technology (EQUaT) is committed to ensuring that this policy is accessible, understandable, and actionable for all staff, faculty, and stakeholders.

Access Points

Digital Access: The policy shall be published on the official university website and downloadable in multiple formats (PDF, text, audio) to ensure wide reach.

Physical Copies: Printed copies shall be available in administrative offices, faculty departments, the university library, and staff resource centers.

Language Inclusion: Where necessary, summaries or translations will be provided in commonly spoken languages such as; Luganda and Kiswahili, to increase reach and clarity.

Orientation and Training: All new employees will receive training on their rights and responsibilities under this policy during induction. Special sessions will cover living wage standards, non-discrimination, labor rights, and grievance/appeal processes.

Infographics and Signage: Key principles including fair pay, gender pay equity tracking, union representation, and appeal mechanisms will be highlighted on posters, digital screens, and signage across campus to increase visibility.

Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups: Special provisions will be made to ensure that persons with disabilities, outsourced staff, and those with limited digital access are fully supported to understand and exercise their rights under this policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure the effective implementation of the Employee Rights Policy, Equator University of Science and Technology (EQUaT) shall establish a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework with clear indicators to track compliance with fair employment standards and labor rights.

Compliance Indicators

- 100% of staff employed under fair contractual terms, with salaries meeting or exceeding the living wage. Evidence of compliance shall include salary scales benchmarked against the living wage standard, updated annually and published in staff reports.
- Existence of a non-discriminatory recruitment policy with 100% enforcement.
- Gender balance in recruitment and leadership positions, with annual gender pay equity reporting.
- Representation of persons with disabilities and marginalized groups.
- Social protection benefits provided to all staff (National Social Security Fund, Medical Insurance, etc.).
- Timeliness and regularity of staff payments ensured.
- Existence of functioning unions, staff associations, with staff free to participate.
- Zero tolerance and active monitoring of forced labor, modern slavery, trafficking, or child labor cases.
- Guarantees of fair treatment and equivalent rights for outsourced workers.
- Accessible appeal and grievance mechanisms with records of cases resolved annually.
- Periodic employee satisfaction surveys conducted and results integrated into HR policies.

This policy shall remain in effect and be reviewed periodically to ensure continuous alignment with international labour standards.