Inclusiveness Policy

MSRUAS/REG/INL POL/2020-21

ज्ञानं विज्ञानं च भक्तिसहितं

Pro Vice Chancellor
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This Policy entitled *"Inclusiveness"*

is applicable to all Faculties of MSRUAS

from the Academic Year 2020-21

(As per the SRAs of the respective Faculty)

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A. Inclusiveness

A.1 Policy Statement

M. S. Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences (the "University") proudly upholds inclusiveness as a fundamental value in the academic community. The University is steadfast in its commitment to creating an equitable, diverse, and welcoming environment that celebrates individuality, fosters mutual respect, and ensures equal opportunities for all members of MSRUAS.

At the University, inclusiveness is not just a commitment but a guiding principle that shapes its educational and operational practices. MSRUAS believes that embracing diversity enriches the educational experience, broadens horizons, and empowers individuals to excel in an increasingly interconnected and diverse world.

A.2 Policy Objectives

The Inclusiveness Policy of M. S. Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences is driven by the following key objectives:

Promoting Diversity: The University seeks to promote diversity through various initiatives, including the provision of scholarships aimed at facilitating access to education for underrepresented communities.

Equal Opportunities: The University is resolute in its commitment to providing equal opportunities for all members of the University, irrespective of their background, identity, or abilities. Discrimination of any form is strictly prohibited.

Celebrating Diversity: The University actively organizes and participates in events that celebrate diversity, with a focus on fostering cross-cultural understanding and appreciation of varied backgrounds and traditions.

Accessibility and Accommodations: The University ensures that its campus and events are accessible to individuals with disabilities by providing the necessary accommodations, facilities, and support, thus fostering full participation.

Inclusive Leadership: The University is dedicated to promoting inclusiveness during appointments to senior leadership roles. The approach is to select candidates based on merit and their potential to contribute to the University's growth, free from bias.

Community Engagement: The commitment to inclusiveness extends beyond the campus as The University actively collaborates with external organizations and institutions to foster inclusiveness in the broader community, thereby making a positive impact beyond its academic boundaries.

A.3 Scope of the Inclusiveness Policy

The Inclusiveness Policy of M. S. Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences is comprehensive and applies to all aspects of University life. It encompasses the following areas:

Admissions and Scholarships: This policy applies to the admissions process, including the allocation of scholarships, ensuring that the University provides equal access to education and financial support for students from diverse backgrounds.

Faculty and Staff Recruitment: The policy extends to the recruitment and promotion of faculty and staff, emphasizing the importance of diversity and equal opportunity in building the University's academic workforce.

Campus Environment: Inclusiveness is reflected in the physical and social aspects of the campus environment. The University ensures accessibility, accommodation, and an atmosphere that fosters cross-cultural understanding.

Curriculum and Teaching: The curriculum incorporates inclusivity, offering a diverse and balanced educational experience. Faculty members are encouraged to adopt inclusive teaching methods and create an equitable learning environment.

Leadership Appointments: The policy guides the selection of candidates for senior leadership positions, emphasizing merit-based appointments that align with the principles of inclusiveness and equal opportunity.

Community Engagement: The University extends its commitment to inclusiveness beyond the campus boundaries, actively engaging with external organizations, institutions, and communities to promote diversity and inclusivity in the broader society.

Monitoring and Accountability: The policy encompasses the monitoring and accountability of inclusivity efforts, including the establishment of key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess the University's progress in promoting diversity and inclusivity.

Complaints and Reporting: Procedures for reporting and addressing discrimination or violations of the Inclusiveness Policy are included, ensuring that individuals have a channel to voice concerns and seek resolution.

This policy applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, administrators, and external partners. The scope of the policy extends to both campuses and all affiliated institutions and facilities.

A.4 Scholarships for Diversity and Access

The University's commitment to promoting diversity and inclusiveness is exemplified by a range of scholarships aimed at extending equal opportunities to underrepresented communities. These scholarships include:

State-Based Scholarships: These scholarships are offered to students hailing from remote areas of India, particularly from regions such as the North Eastern States. These financial aid opportunities aim to facilitate access to quality higher education for students from these geographically distant areas.

Scholarships for Tibetan Students: The University extends scholarships to Tibetan students, providing them with the opportunity to pursue higher education at the institution.

Sports Scholarships: MSRUAS recognizes the talent and dedication of meritorious athletes. Sports scholarships are provided to these students to support their academic and athletic pursuits simultaneously.

Scholarships for Orphan Students: MSRUAS is committed to supporting orphaned students on their academic journey. Financial assistance is extended to help them access education and develop the skills they need to succeed.

Scholarships for Differently-Abled Students: Differently-abled students are offered scholarships to ensure equitable participation in higher education. These scholarships provide the necessary support to help them thrive academically.

A.5 Diverse Faculty and Staff Recruitment

The University places great importance on diversity in its faculty and staff. It actively seeks individuals from diverse regional, linguistic, and communal backgrounds to enrich the academic community. The

University's recruitment practices are guided by the principles of equal opportunity, fairness, and the objective of fostering diversity in the workplace.

The University prohibits discrimination based on factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or disability during faculty and staff appointments and promotions. The commitment to inclusiveness extends to all aspects of employment, ensuring that its workforce reflects the varied backgrounds and perspectives of broader community.

A.6 Celebration of Diversity

The University celebrates diversity through various initiatives, including:

Festivals and Commemorative Days: Cultural festivals, regional observances, and linguistic celebrations are organized to create opportunities for cross-cultural understanding and appreciation. These events not only provide a platform for sharing and celebrating cultural richness but also foster a sense of belonging and unity among the diverse members of MSRUAS.

Inclusive Curriculum: The University's curriculum is designed to be inclusive, encompassing diverse perspectives, histories, and experiences. It is committed to exposing the students to a wide range of cultural, historical, and social backgrounds. In doing so, the University equips them with the knowledge and understanding required to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

Accessibility and Accommodations: The University ensures that all campus facilities and events are accessible to individuals with disabilities. It provides the necessary accommodations, such as sign language interpreters, accessible venues, and captioning, to facilitate the full participation of all community members. Campus facilities are designed to meet or exceed accessibility standards to ensure inclusiveness.

A.7 Inclusiveness in Leadership

The University promotes inclusiveness during appointments to senior leadership positions. Its approach is guided by the principle of selecting candidates based on merit and their ability to contribute to the University's growth, irrespective of their background or identity. MSRUAS adheres to a fair, transparent, and bias-free process in leadership appointments, ensuring that the most qualified individuals have the opportunity to lead and shape the University's future.

A.8   Community Engagement

The University extends its commitment to inclusiveness beyond the campus boundaries. It actively collaborates with external organizations, institutions, and communities to foster inclusiveness and diversity in the broader community. By engaging with external partners, the University seeks to make a meaningful impact, share best practices, and inspire positive change in the wider society.

A.9   Implementation Guidelines

To realize the policy objectives, the University Leadership and individuals within the University community must actively participate in the implementation of this Inclusiveness Policy. Implementation guidelines are outlined below for both University Leadership and individuals:

A.10   Implementation by University Leadership

Lead by Example: University Leadership, including senior administrators and department heads, should lead by example in promoting inclusiveness. They must demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusivity in their decision-making and actions.

Resource Allocation: Ensure that resources, including scholarships and support services, are allocated to promote diversity and inclusivity within the University. University Leadership should oversee the effective allocation of financial and human resources for these purposes.

Policy Integration: Ensure that inclusiveness is integrated into all University policies, practices, and decision-making processes. University Leadership must advocate for the policy's principles and objectives to be reflected in all aspects of University life.

Communication and Awareness: University Leadership is responsible for fostering awareness of inclusiveness policies and initiatives within the University community. They must communicate the University's commitment to inclusiveness and provide regular updates on progress.

Accountability: University Leadership should hold themselves accountable for the implementation of inclusiveness policies. They must establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess the University's progress in promoting diversity and inclusivity

A.11 Implementation by Individuals

Respect and Inclusion: All individuals within the University community, including students, faculty, and staff, must demonstrate respect and inclusion towards individuals from diverse backgrounds and identities. Respect for diversity is integral to promoting inclusiveness.

Participation: Individuals should actively participate in diversity and inclusivity initiatives organized by the University. This includes attending events, workshops, and training programs that promote cross-cultural understanding.

Reporting Discrimination: Individuals should report any incidents of discrimination, bias, or violations of the Inclusiveness Policy. The University encourages a culture of openness and accountability, and reporting discrimination is crucial in maintaining an inclusive environment.

Supportive Behavior: Individuals are expected to exhibit behavior that supports inclusiveness. This includes active listening, empathy, and understanding towards the experiences and perspectives of others.

Promotion of Inclusivity: Individuals can contribute to inclusiveness by actively promoting a culture that celebrates diversity, encourages dialogue, and challenges stereotypes or biases.

Adherence to Policy: All members of the University community are expected to adhere to the Inclusiveness Policy and cooperate with its principles and objectives. Violations of the policy will be addressed in accordance with established procedures.

By embracing and implementing these principles of inclusivity at an individual level, the University community can collectively create a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive academic environment.

A.12 Review and Revision

The Inclusiveness Policy is a dynamic and living document. The University is committed to continuous improvement in its inclusiveness efforts. To ensure that the policy remains current and effective, regular reviews and revisions are imperative.

Periodic Review: The University will conduct periodic reviews of the Inclusiveness Policy to assess its relevance and effectiveness in achieving the stated objectives. These reviews will be undertaken by a

designated committee responsible for monitoring inclusiveness efforts.

Feedback and Input: Input from the University community, including students, faculty, staff, and external partners, will be actively sought during the review process. Feedback will be considered in evaluating the policy's impact and identifying areas for enhancement.

Alignment with Evolving Needs: The policy will be updated to align with evolving needs and changing circumstances. The University will respond to emerging challenges and opportunities in the realm of inclusiveness by adjusting the policy accordingly.

Transparency: The process of review and revision will be transparent, with updates and amendments communicated to the University community. This transparency fosters accountability and ensures that all stakeholders are informed about the policy's status.

Inclusiveness Task Force: An Inclusiveness Task Force, comprised of representatives from various segments of the University community, will oversee the review and revision process. This task force will collaborate to provide insights, perspectives, and recommendations.

External Audits: Periodically, external audits will be conducted to evaluate the University's inclusiveness efforts. The findings of these audits will inform the review process and guide revisions to the policy.

Adaptation to Legal Requirements: The policy will be adapted to comply with any changes in legal requirements related to inclusiveness, diversity, and equal opportunity.

By adhering to a structured and transparent review and revision process, the University ensures that its Inclusiveness Policy remains a dynamic tool for fostering diversity, equity, and inclusivity. The commitment to inclusiveness will continue to evolve in response to the changing needs and aspirations of the academic community.