Anti-Discrimination Policy for Faculty ,Staff and Students

1. Purpose

To prevent discrimination and unequal treatment in all University activities and to ensure that staff, students, applicants and other persons engaging with VISTAS are treated with dignity, fairness and respect.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching and administrative staff; permanent, probationary, contractual, temporary, part-time and visiting personnel; students across all programmes and modes of study; applicants; research scholars; interns; volunteers; and persons providing services on campus, to the extent applicable.

3. Definitions

- **Discrimination:** Unfair or less favourable treatment, exclusion, restriction or distinction that impairs equal access, participation, opportunity or dignity, whether direct or indirect, and whether prohibited by applicable law or this policy.
- **Protected grounds:** Grounds recognised under applicable law and institutional policy, including caste, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, disability, age, place of birth, national origin, marital or family status, pregnancy, and other legally protected characteristics.
- **Reasonable accommodation:** Necessary and appropriate adjustments, where required, to enable a person with a disability to participate and access education, employment or University services on an equal basis.

4. Policy Statement

VISTAS is committed to equality, non-discrimination, inclusion and equal opportunity. Discrimination, victimisation and exclusion are prohibited in admission, recruitment, employment, teaching, assessment, research, campus life, access to facilities, student services, promotion, training, discipline and other University activities. Decisions shall be based on relevant, transparent and legitimate criteria.

5. Policy Principles and Commitments

- Equal access to admission, recruitment, learning opportunities, employment, training, promotion, facilities and student support shall be promoted through fair and transparent procedures.
- No person shall be subjected to discrimination, intimidation, exclusion or adverse treatment on a protected ground.
- Selection, assessment, appraisal, allocation of duties and disciplinary decisions shall use relevant criteria and be applied consistently.
- VISTAS shall provide reasonable accommodation in accordance with applicable law and the University's Reasonable Accommodation and Accessibility Policy.
- Information about reporting channels and available support shall be communicated to staff and students in accessible formats.

- Complaints shall be handled impartially, promptly and confidentially, subject to due process and legal obligations.
- No retaliation shall be permitted against a person who raises a concern or participates in a process in good faith.
- Where a matter falls within a statutory or specialised mechanism, including the Internal Committee under the POSH Act, it shall be referred to that mechanism without substituting this policy for the applicable procedure.

6. Implementation Procedure

1. An affected person or witness may report a concern to the designated Grievance Officer, Human Resources, Student Affairs or the appropriate statutory / institutional committee through the published channel.
2. The receiving office shall acknowledge and record the concern, normally within three working days, and identify the appropriate process.
3. The matter shall be referred to the competent authority or committee having jurisdiction. The person complained against shall be given a fair opportunity to respond.
4. The authority handling the matter shall examine relevant information impartially and recommend or take proportionate action under applicable law and University rules.
5. The complainant shall be informed of the outcome to the extent permitted by confidentiality and applicable procedure.
6. Human Resources and Student Affairs shall review anonymised, aggregate information periodically to identify recurring issues and improvement needs.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Human Resources Department	Implement the policy for employment matters, communicate staff rights, maintain appropriate records and coordinate corrective action.
Student Affairs / Student Welfare Office	Communicate the policy to students, facilitate reporting and coordinate student-related referrals.
Heads of Schools / Departments	Apply fair and consistent practices and promptly refer reported concerns.
Grievance Officer / designated committees	Receive, route and address matters within their authority, following applicable procedures.
All staff and students	Respect the dignity and rights of others and cooperate with lawful institutional processes.
Competent Authority	Provide oversight, approve institutional measures and review implementation.

8. Records and Supporting Evidence

- Approved policy and evidence of circulation to staff and students
- Admission, recruitment, assessment and employment procedures demonstrating fair criteria

- Awareness, orientation and training materials and attendance records
- Anonymised complaint register, referral and action records, subject to confidentiality
- Periodic review reports and corrective-action records

9. Review and Amendment

This policy shall be reviewed at least once every three years, or earlier if applicable law, University structures, identified risks or implementation reviews require amendment. The review date, approved amendments and responsible authority shall be recorded.

Created / Revised on: _____

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Signature / Seal: _____