



TERMEZ STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy on Fair Employment, Equality, and Labour Rights



1. PREAMBLE

Termez State University (hereinafter referred to as “the University” or “TerSU”) affirms its unwavering commitment to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes fairness, equality, and respect for human rights in all aspects of employment and university operations.

As a state higher education institution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the University acknowledges its responsibility to align its internal regulations with both **national laws** and **international obligations** arising from treaties and conventions to which the Republic of Uzbekistan is a party.

This policy is enacted pursuant to:

- The **Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan**, particularly Articles 18–46 guaranteeing equality before the law, the right to work, and the prohibition of discrimination;
- The **Labour Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan (2022)**, ensuring fair and safe working conditions, equal pay, and protection against forced labour;
- The **Law on Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men (2019)**;
- The **Law on Education (2020)**;
- The **Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-158 (September 11, 2023)** on measures for improving university performance and global competitiveness; and
- Relevant **International Labour Organization (ILO)** and **United Nations conventions**, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the ILO Conventions Nos. 29, 87, 98, 100, 105, 111, and 138, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (in particular, SDG 5, SDG 8, and SDG 10).

The University recognizes that equitable employment practices, the prevention of discrimination, and the protection of human dignity are central to achieving sustainable institutional growth and fulfilling its mission as a modern, socially responsible university.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a comprehensive institutional framework that ensures fair employment, equality of opportunity, non-discrimination, respect for human rights, and ethical labour standards across all university activities.

This document integrates the University's commitments under the following four policy domains:

1. Ending discrimination in the workplace (including discrimination based on religion, gender, age, or sexuality).
2. Preventing and eliminating all forms of forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, and child labour.
3. Guaranteeing equivalent labour rights and working conditions for individuals employed by third-party contractors and outsourced service providers.
4. Ensuring pay scale equity, including the continuous assessment and elimination of gender-based pay gaps.

These objectives are implemented through TerSU's governance structures, its Human Resources Department, and the Office of Compliance and Ethics, under the oversight of the Rector and University Council.

3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

- All full-time and part-time employees, academic staff, administrative and technical personnel, and project-based workers engaged by the University;
- Students employed under university-funded schemes, internships, or research grants;
- Contracted service providers, vendors, and partner organizations engaged through outsourcing or procurement agreements; and
- Any individual or organization acting under the University's authority or representation, both within Uzbekistan and in international partnerships.

The provisions of this policy extend to all stages of employment — recruitment, selection, training, promotion, compensation, and termination — and are applicable to any workplace, laboratory, classroom, dormitory, or field site operated by TerSU.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Termez State University is committed to fostering an inclusive, safe, and equitable work environment that reflects the values of respect, justice, and professional integrity. The University condemns and prohibits all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, and inequality.

Every member of the University community, regardless of position or background, has the right to fair treatment, equal opportunities, and freedom from coercion or abuse.

The University shall ensure that:

- Employment decisions are based solely on qualifications, competence, and performance;
- All forms of forced or exploitative labour are strictly prohibited and penalized under internal disciplinary procedures and Uzbek law;
- No employee, contractor, or worker shall face discrimination on the grounds of sex, age, religion, nationality, disability, or sexual orientation;
- Workers employed by outsourced entities enjoy equivalent rights, safety, and welfare standards as university employees; and
- Pay structures and benefits are administered transparently and equitably, with regular audits to identify and correct gender-based pay disparities.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles form the ethical and legal foundation of this policy:

a. Equality and Non-Discrimination: The University shall treat all persons equally, without prejudice or bias, in accordance with Article 18 of the Constitution and ILO Convention No. 111. Discrimination in hiring, training, promotion, or compensation is strictly forbidden.

b. Human Dignity and Freedom of Choice: All employment must be freely chosen. No person shall be compelled to work through coercion, intimidation, or debt. The University supports the complete abolition of forced and child labour, consistent with ILO Conventions Nos. 29, 105, and 138.

c. Transparency and Accountability: Recruitment, performance evaluation, and salary administration shall be transparent, subject to periodic review by the Human Resources Department and the University Council.

d. Fair Remuneration and Equity: The University upholds equal pay for equal work, as established by ILO Convention No. 100 and Uzbekistan's Labour Code. Any gender-based pay differences must be identified, documented, and eliminated through corrective measures.

e. Third-Party Labour Rights: All outsourced labour contracts shall include explicit clauses guaranteeing fair wages, safe working conditions, and protection from discrimination, in line with the University's internal standards and national labour law.

6. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

The effective enforcement of this policy relies on a structured institutional mechanism ensuring responsibility, transparency, and compliance at every level of university governance. Implementation shall be coordinated by the **Human Resources Department**, under the oversight of the **Rector** and the **University Council**, and supported by the **Office of Compliance and Ethics**, the **Legal Department**, and the **Trade Union Committee**.

Each administrative unit and faculty is required to incorporate the provisions of this policy into their operational and strategic plans. Deans, directors, and heads of departments bear direct responsibility for maintaining a discrimination-free and rights-based working environment within their respective divisions.

The **Office of Compliance and Ethics** shall serve as the central coordinating body for the policy's implementation, monitoring, and reporting. It shall ensure that all procedures and employment practices adhere to the relevant laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the University Charter, as well as to the international obligations assumed under the United Nations and the International Labour Organization.

6.1 Employment and Recruitment Procedures

All employment and recruitment processes at TerSU must be conducted in accordance with the principles of fairness, transparency, and merit. Job descriptions shall clearly define the competencies required, and selection shall be based solely on qualifications and demonstrated ability.

Recruitment announcements shall be publicly accessible through the University's official channels, and all applicants shall be provided with equal opportunity to apply. Shortlisting and selection committees must be diverse and include both genders to ensure impartiality and equitable representation.

During recruitment, no inquiry or assessment shall be made into an applicant's religious beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics unrelated to job performance. Employment contracts shall comply with the national Labour Code and be issued in writing, specifying the rights, responsibilities, and benefits of the employee.

The University shall ensure that all employees are registered for social protection, medical insurance, and pension contributions in compliance with national legislation.

6.2 Training, Awareness, and Capacity-Building

To ensure consistent understanding and compliance, the University shall provide regular training and capacity-building programs for staff, managers, and administrators. These programs shall include:

- Training on non-discrimination, diversity, and equal opportunity;
- Awareness sessions on the prevention of forced labour, harassment, and exploitation;
- Workshops on ethical recruitment, pay equity, and human rights protection in the workplace.

All new employees shall participate in an induction session that includes a presentation of this policy and related codes of conduct. Periodic refresher courses shall be mandatory for senior administrators, faculty heads, and human resources personnel. The University shall also organize seminars in partnership with the **Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations**, the **UN Development Programme (UNDP)**, and other relevant bodies to promote labour rights awareness and gender equity principles.

7. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

7.1 Oversight and Review

The implementation of this policy shall be reviewed annually by the **University Council** and the **Office of Compliance and Ethics**, which will assess progress and identify areas requiring improvement. The review shall evaluate:

- Compliance with non-discrimination and fair employment standards;
- Adherence to national and international labour laws;
- The effectiveness of measures against forced or exploitative labour;
- The status of gender pay equity and corrective actions taken; and
- The welfare and rights of outsourced and contract-based workers.

Each year, the **Human Resources Department** shall submit a confidential report to the Rector detailing compliance indicators, employee demographics, recruitment practices, pay scales, and recorded grievances or violations. The Rector shall ensure that appropriate corrective measures are implemented and that all departments cooperate fully with internal and external audits.

7.2 Reporting Mechanisms

The University shall maintain a confidential and accessible reporting mechanism that allows employees, students, and contractors to report any violation of this policy.

Complaints may concern acts of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, unfair pay, or breaches of human rights.

Reports may be submitted to:

- The **Office of Compliance and Ethics**;
- The **University Trade Union Committee**; or
- The **Rector's Secretariat**.

All complaints shall be treated with strict confidentiality. The complainant's identity shall be protected, and no individual shall suffer retaliation for reporting a concern in good faith. Investigations shall be conducted promptly and fairly, and outcomes shall be documented.

If violations are confirmed, disciplinary measures shall be taken in accordance with the University's internal regulations and the **Labour Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan**. Where necessary, cases shall be referred to law enforcement or judicial authorities.

7.3 Internal Audit and External Evaluation

The University shall establish an **Internal Audit Subcommittee on Equality and Labour Rights** to periodically evaluate employment practices, remuneration systems, and contractor compliance. This Subcommittee shall function under the University Council and report to the Rector on a semi-annual basis.

External evaluations may also be conducted by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation or by independent audit organizations authorized by the Government of Uzbekistan. The findings of these evaluations shall inform policy adjustments, capacity-building initiatives, and revisions to employment procedures to ensure continuous improvement.

8. PROTECTION AGAINST FORCED LABOUR, HUMAN TRAFFICKING, AND CHILD LABOUR

8.1 Commitment

Termez State University categorically condemns and prohibits any form of forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, or the employment of children in its operations, supply chains, or affiliated institutions. This commitment extends to all University partners, contractors, and service providers.

The University adheres to **ILO Conventions Nos. 29 (Forced Labour, 1930), 105 (Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957), and 138 (Minimum Age, 1973)**, as well as the

Law on Combating Human Trafficking of the Republic of Uzbekistan (2008) and related national regulations.

No employee, student, or contractor shall be compelled to work under threat, coercion, or exploitation.

All employment must be based on mutual consent, proper remuneration, and safe working conditions consistent with national labour standards.

8.2 Preventive Measures

The University shall maintain a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of exploitative labour within its premises or by third-party contractors. Contractual agreements shall include binding clauses obliging partners to comply with Uzbek and international labour laws.

The University shall also conduct periodic risk assessments to identify and mitigate potential risks of forced labour or human trafficking within its operations. All staff members responsible for recruitment, procurement, and campus security shall receive specialized training on identifying and preventing such violations.

9. EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

9.1 Institutional Commitment

Termez State University affirms that equality of opportunity is a fundamental human right and a prerequisite for social progress. The University recognizes that an inclusive academic and administrative environment enhances creativity, productivity, and integrity. No form of discrimination shall be tolerated within any unit, faculty, department, or activity associated with the University.

This commitment is rooted in the **Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Articles 18–46)**, the **Law on Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men (2019)**, and the **ILO Convention No. 111 on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation)**. It further reflects the values enshrined in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)** and the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**, particularly **SDG 5 (Gender Equality)** and **SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities)**.

9.2 Prohibition of Discrimination

The University prohibits any form of direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, or victimization based on race, colour, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion or belief, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age, or social origin. All employment decisions — including recruitment, promotion, compensation, and

dismissal — must be free of prejudice and based solely on objective criteria related to job performance, experience, and qualifications.

Special attention shall be given to ensuring gender equality and representation in leadership roles, research teams, and university governance structures. The University shall maintain gender balance in recruitment committees and decision-making bodies wherever possible.

9.3 Support for Equality and Inclusion

The University shall implement targeted programs to support underrepresented groups, ensuring their equal access to employment, training, and leadership opportunities.

Measures shall include:

- Establishing mentorship programs for women and young academics;
- Providing reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities in line with national law;
- Promoting awareness campaigns on tolerance, inclusion, and cultural diversity across campus; and
- Integrating gender sensitivity and equality education into staff development courses.

The **Office of Human Resources** shall collect data on gender, age, and other relevant indicators to identify patterns of inequality and report findings annually to the **University Council**.

9.4 Preventing Harassment and Hostile Conduct

The University maintains a zero-tolerance stance toward all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment, psychological intimidation, and abuse of authority. All staff and students must uphold mutual respect and professional ethics. Individuals found responsible for harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the **Internal Labour Regulations of TerSU**, the **Labour Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan**, and other applicable legislation.

Confidential counselling and grievance procedures shall be made available for victims of harassment, ensuring safety, anonymity, and access to legal remedies.

10. PAY EQUITY AND GENDER PAY GAP ELIMINATION

10.1 Equal Remuneration Principle

Termez State University fully adheres to the **Equal Pay for Equal Work** principle as outlined in **ILO Convention No. 100 (1951)** and Article 180 of the **Labour Code of Uzbekistan**. All employees performing work of equal value, skill, and responsibility must receive equal remuneration regardless of gender or personal characteristics.

Salary structures, bonuses, and allowances shall be standardized according to transparent criteria defined by the University Council and approved by the Rector. Any deviation from the pay scale must be justified by objective performance metrics and recorded in writing.

10.2 Pay Scale Transparency and Auditing

The **Human Resources Department**, together with the **Internal Audit Subcommittee**, shall maintain an official register of pay scales and periodically review it to ensure internal equity.

A comprehensive **Pay Equity Audit** shall be conducted at least once every two years, assessing disparities between male and female employees, and recommending corrective actions.

Findings of the audit shall be reviewed by the University Council, and summary results shall be made available to staff to promote transparency and institutional trust. If any unjustified gender-based or position-based wage discrepancies are identified, the University shall take immediate corrective measures through salary adjustments or policy amendments.

10.3 Gender Equality in Career Development

The University acknowledges that pay equity cannot be achieved without equal access to professional growth. Therefore, all academic and administrative staff shall have access to fair promotion pathways, research funding, and training programs. Gender equality indicators shall be integrated into staff performance evaluations and annual institutional reports.

TerSU shall encourage female participation in managerial positions and support women in research and innovation through targeted grants, professional mentorship, and family-supportive workplace policies.

11. RIGHTS OF WORKERS IN OUTSOURCED AND CONTRACTED ACTIVITIES

11.1 Principle of Equivalent Rights

Termez State University recognizes that the protection of human rights and fair labour standards must extend beyond its direct employees. All third-party workers engaged through outsourcing, service contracts, or affiliated enterprises must enjoy **equivalent rights and conditions** as those directly employed by the University. This includes access to safe working conditions, fair wages, rest periods, social protection, and non-discrimination in accordance with the **Labour Code of Uzbekistan, ILO standards**, and the **University's Ethical Conduct Policy**.

11.2 Responsibilities of Contractors and Partners

All contracts and memoranda of cooperation with private enterprises or public service providers shall include clauses requiring full compliance with this policy and applicable national laws. The University's Procurement Department shall ensure that service providers:

- Do not engage in forced or child labour;
- Respect wage and benefit standards equivalent to those of TerSU employees performing comparable work;
- Provide safe and hygienic working environments; and
- Allow inspection and monitoring by the University's compliance officers.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the termination of contracts, financial penalties, or disqualification from future tenders.

11.3 Monitoring of Outsourced Activities

The **Office of Compliance and Ethics**, in coordination with the **Procurement Department** and **Legal Division**, shall carry out periodic audits of all outsourced services, including cleaning, maintenance, security, and cafeteria operations. Audit results shall be documented and submitted to the Rector for review.

Where discrepancies or violations are identified, the University shall require immediate remediation by the contractor. If corrective measures are not taken within the specified timeframe, the University reserves the right to terminate the contractual relationship.

11.4 Worker Welfare and Grievance Access

Outsourced employees must have access to the same grievance procedures, reporting mechanisms, and protection against retaliation as regular University staff.

They may file complaints to the Office of Compliance and Ethics or through the Trade Union Committee without interference from their direct employer.

The University shall maintain open communication with contracted workers to ensure that their rights, health, and welfare are respected at all times.

12. INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENFORCEMENT

12.1 Accountability Structure

Ultimate responsibility for the enforcement of this policy rests with the **Rector of Termez State University**, who shall ensure institutional compliance and provide leadership in upholding the principles of fairness, equality, and human rights across all university functions.

The **University Council** shall oversee periodic reviews, monitor the effectiveness of the policy, and approve strategic actions for improvement.

The **Office of Compliance and Ethics** shall function as the operational body for coordination, investigation, and reporting. It shall work closely with the **Human Resources Department**, the **Legal Division**, and the **Internal Audit Subcommittee on Equality and Labour Rights**.

All Deans, Directors, and Heads of Departments are individually responsible for implementing the policy within their units. Failure to act upon known violations may be considered a breach of duty and subject to administrative sanctions.

12.2 Disciplinary Measures

Any act of discrimination, harassment, forced labour, exploitation, or violation of pay equity within the University shall be treated as a serious disciplinary offence. Depending on the severity of the case, disciplinary measures may include:

- Written warning or reprimand;
- Suspension or removal from managerial duties;
- Reduction of remuneration;
- Termination of employment; or
- Referral to law enforcement agencies in accordance with the **Labour Code** and **Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan**.

For third-party contractors or vendors, violations may result in **contract termination, disqualification from future cooperation**, or referral to relevant authorities.

Disciplinary decisions shall be made based on documented evidence, ensuring procedural fairness and the right of defense for all parties involved. The University guarantees that complainants, witnesses, and investigators shall not face retaliation or adverse treatment for participating in good-faith investigations.

12.3 Confidentiality and Data Protection

All reports, investigations, and disciplinary proceedings shall be conducted in strict confidence, ensuring the protection of personal data and dignity of the individuals involved.

Information shall be stored securely and accessed only by authorized officials. Public disclosure of investigation results may occur only when required by law or with the written consent of the parties concerned.

The University shall comply with the **Law on Personal Data Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan (2019)** and relevant UN guidelines on data privacy in employment contexts.

13. REPORTING, TRANSPARENCY, AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

13.1 Annual Labour Rights Report

Each year, the **Office of Compliance and Ethics**, in coordination with the **Human Resources Department**, shall prepare an **Annual Report on Fair Employment, Equality, and Labour Rights**.

This report shall summarize progress on:

- Implementation of non-discrimination and equality measures;
- Compliance with anti-forced labour and anti-trafficking provisions;
- Results of gender pay gap assessments;
- Conditions of outsourced and contracted labour; and
- Disciplinary actions or corrective measures taken.

The report shall be reviewed by the **University Council** and submitted to the **Rector**, with copies sent to the **Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation** upon request. A summarized version of the report shall be published on the official University website to ensure public transparency and institutional accountability.

13.2 Cooperation with National and International Bodies

Termez State University shall cooperate with relevant governmental and international organizations to promote best practices in fair employment and equality. This includes partnerships with:

- The **Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations of the Republic of Uzbekistan**;
- The **National Human Rights Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan**;
- The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**;
- The **International Labour Organization (ILO)**; and
- Other educational and civil society organizations working in the fields of human rights, gender equality, and labour protection.

Through these collaborations, TerSU shall engage in capacity-building initiatives, policy dialogues, and joint monitoring to strengthen national implementation of the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**, particularly SDG 5, SDG 8, and SDG 10.

14. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

This policy shall remain in force until amended or repealed by the University Council. A comprehensive review shall be undertaken every **three years**, or earlier if required by changes in national legislation, international obligations, or university governance reforms.

The **Office of Compliance and Ethics** shall initiate the review process and submit recommendations for amendment to the University Council. All revisions shall be approved by the Rector and formally recorded in the University's internal regulatory register. Minor procedural updates may be approved by the Rector upon consultation with the relevant departments without requiring full Council approval, provided they do not alter the fundamental principles of the policy.

15. DISSEMINATION AND AWARENESS

Upon enactment, this policy shall be circulated electronically and in print across all faculties, departments, and administrative offices.

The **Human Resources Department** shall incorporate policy orientation into employee induction sessions and make the full text accessible via the University's internal portal and website.

All employees, students, and contractors must confirm in writing that they have read and understood this policy. Training modules on equality, labour rights, and ethical conduct shall be mandatory components of staff professional development.

The University shall encourage open dialogue on equality and human rights issues, ensuring that all members of its community understand their rights and responsibilities under this framework.

16. FINAL PROVISIONS

This policy enters into force upon the Rector's signature and approval by the University Council. It shall be binding upon all staff, departments, and affiliated entities of Termez State University.

Any conflict between this policy and other internal regulations shall be resolved in favor of the provisions that best protect human rights and fair labour standards. In case of contradiction between this policy and national law, the latter shall prevail; however, the University shall interpret and apply its provisions in the manner most consistent with international human rights norms and the principles of social justice.

By implementing this policy, Termez State University reaffirms its role as a responsible educational institution committed to equality, dignity, and sustainable development, in line with the vision of the **United Nations**, the **Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan**, and the ethical principles of higher education worldwide.

17. ENTRY INTO FORCE AND REVIEW

The policy is effective from 1 January 2025.

It shall be reviewed every three years, or within six months following any relevant legislative change.

18. RESPONSIBLE UNIT AND CONTACT

Head of HR Department and the Chairman of the Trade Union Committee.

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Signed by the Rector:

Prof. Abdukodir Toshkulov



Agreed by:

Obidjon Shofiev

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Ural Akhmedov

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Gafur Togaev

Vice-Rector for International Relations



Samad Nishonov

Chairman of the Trade Union Committee



Chori Abdunazarov

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