



TERMEZ STATE UNIVERSITY

POLICY ON THE PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUALS REPORTING DISCRIMINATION AND ENSURING NON-RETALIATION



**Achieve gender
equality and
empower all
women and girls**



DISCRIMINATION



Termez 2025

PREAMBLE

Termez State University is committed to maintaining an environment of mutual respect, inclusivity, and integrity across all its academic and administrative structures. The university recognises that discrimination—whether based on gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, or any other personal attribute—harms both individuals and the institution’s collective mission.

Creating a culture where individuals feel empowered to speak up about misconduct or discrimination is essential for institutional growth and justice. This policy establishes a framework that guarantees full protection for any person who, in good faith, reports discriminatory practices in educational or employment contexts. The university affirms that no student, academic, or staff member shall face retaliation, dismissal, or disadvantage as a result of making such a report.

The principles guiding this policy are rooted in the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Labour Code, the Law “On Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” (2019), and relevant international conventions ratified by Uzbekistan, particularly those of the International Labour Organization and the United Nations.

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Discrimination in educational or employment settings takes many forms—unequal access to resources, biased assessment, gender stereotypes, and workplace harassment. The university rejects all such practices unequivocally.

Speaking up about workplace or academic misconduct is often difficult, as social stigma and fear of retaliation discourage victims and witnesses from coming forward. Termez State University therefore commits to creating a “Speak Up” culture where every individual can safely and confidentially report discrimination, knowing that their rights and dignity will be protected.

The university will periodically assess employee and student trust levels regarding reporting systems and their effectiveness. Surveys and feedback mechanisms will be conducted to ensure that voices are heard, confidentiality is maintained, and appropriate follow-up actions are taken promptly.

2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all members of Termez State University—students, academic staff, administrative personnel, contractors, and visitors—who experience or witness discrimination in education or employment contexts.

It particularly addresses discrimination affecting women in academia and professional life, recognising the historical and structural challenges faced by women in male-dominated environments. The policy aims to ensure equitable participation, advancement, and treatment of women in every sector of university activity.

The protection mechanisms outlined herein form part of the university's broader framework for gender equality, diversity, and empowerment.

3. POLICY PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS

The university upholds several core principles under this framework.

First, every individual—regardless of position or gender—has the right to learn, work, and grow in an environment free from discrimination or harassment. The university therefore enforces a strict zero-tolerance policy towards any discriminatory act or behaviour.

Second, all persons who report or assist in investigating discrimination are fully protected from retaliation. No adverse change in employment status, grading, access to resources, or academic standing shall result from reporting misconduct in good faith.

Third, the university treats all allegations seriously, ensuring confidentiality and impartiality throughout the process. Complaints shall be examined by a designated **Grievance and Ethics Committee**, composed of trained professionals who operate under strict procedural fairness.

Fourth, the institution promotes the active participation of women at all levels of governance and management, affirming that women represent an essential part of the university community and national development—more than half of the population.

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND PROCEDURES

The implementation of this policy involves practical mechanisms and safeguards.

1. The university ensures full empowerment of female staff and students to work, study, and express their concerns freely. Any report of discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment shall be addressed through the grievance committee without delay, ensuring that the reporting person receives psychological and administrative support.
2. During recruitment or admission processes, the Human Resources Directorate and Academic Affairs Division ensure fair treatment by collecting relevant demographic information only for lawful and analytical purposes, and never for discriminatory decision-making.
3. During service or enrolment, periodic confidential feedback will be collected to identify any educational or employment disadvantage arising from gender, family responsibilities, disability, or other personal factors.
4. Qualified and experienced female staff are entitled to the same salary increments, benefits, and promotion opportunities as their male counterparts. Equality in remuneration is a central pillar of this policy.
5. All employees and students shall have equal access to facilities, training, and professional development programmes. However, additional benefits—such as maternity leave, flexible hours, and medical support—shall be provided to female employees in line with national law.
6. The university encourages women to enhance their qualifications through its internal academic programmes, offering up to a 50 percent fee reduction and flexible evening-class schedules to support working mothers.
7. The university enforces a **Comprehensive Anti-Harassment Policy** that operates in tandem with this framework. Every complaint of harassment or discrimination will be documented, investigated confidentially, and resolved according to the university's Code of Conduct and legal standards of the Republic of Uzbekistan.
8. The Code of Conduct for students and employees shall reflect this policy, mandating respect, inclusivity, and professional ethics in all interactions.

5. PROTECTION FOR WHISTLE-BLOWERS AND COMPLAINTS

Protection of those who report discrimination is central to this framework. No student or employee shall be demoted, dismissed, denied promotion, or disadvantaged for submitting a complaint or assisting in an investigation.

Any act of retaliation—whether direct (such as dismissal, intimidation, or grading bias) or indirect (such as exclusion from projects or committees)—shall be treated as a serious disciplinary offence. The university will take corrective and, where appropriate, punitive action against those responsible.

Complainants and witnesses shall have access to counselling, confidentiality assurances, and, if necessary, temporary re-assignment or academic accommodation to ensure their wellbeing during the investigation process.

6. MONITORING, REPORTING, AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The **Women's Affairs Office** and **Human Resources Department** jointly monitor this policy's implementation. Annual reports shall summarize the number of cases reported, resolved, and pending, without disclosing personal information. The findings shall inform revisions of procedures, training content, and preventive measures.

Training sessions will be provided for staff and students to raise awareness about discrimination, unconscious bias, and the safe use of reporting channels. Senior management shall regularly review these efforts to ensure sustained compliance with national and international standards.

7. CONCLUSION

Encouraging individuals to report misconduct and discrimination remains a significant challenge worldwide. Studies show that a majority of such cases go unreported, often due to fear of retaliation or mistrust in institutional responses. Termez State University acknowledges this challenge and commits itself to overcoming it through transparent action, education, and trust-building.

No act of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation will be tolerated on its premises. Every voice matters, and every report shall be heard with seriousness and compassion. The university's duty is not only to respond to discrimination but to prevent it—to create a safe, equitable, and empowering environment where all individuals, especially women, can thrive academically and professionally.

8. 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.

9. RESPONSIBLE UNIT AND CONTACT

Chairman of the Trade Union Committee.

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