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Use of Social Responsibility Policy ('Policy')

1.   Introduction

The University pursues the principles of social responsibility and sustainable development both in its engagement with external stakeholders and in the management of its internal operations. It believes that the future of the University is best served by respecting the interests of all its stakeholders: students, staff, customers, suppliers and the wider community. It looks actively for opportunities to improve the environment and to contribute to the well-being of the communities in which it operates.

2.   Objectives

Social responsibility describes systemic, responsible business practice which is resilient and ethical and takes into account the social, environmental and long-term impacts of decision-making. This Policy sets out the framework to guide the University's actions in achieving its social responsibility objectives.

3.   Social responsibility framework

The University will work towards fulfilling its social responsibility in the following four areas.

3.1   Teaching, learning support and research

The University's core academic activities are underpinned by the values and principles of social responsibility. In order to ensure this, the University would strive its best to achieve the following:

    a. respect academic freedom for its staff and students;

    b. widen and diversified access to education within a commitment to lifelong learning;

    c. manage student admissions in a transparent and equitable way, using explicit criteria to inform selection decisions and providing formative feedback to unsuccessful candidates;

d. ensure that specific funds provided to support teaching and student fees are used for the purpose for which they are provided;

e. require that its curricula are informed by socially responsible, ethical research and that its graduate attributes incorporate evidence-based thinking and decision-making, active citizenship and employability;

f. adopt a learner-centred approach to teaching and student support, ensuring assessment and feedback are used to promote learning;

g. facilitate collaborative and independent learning that goes beyond the classroom and into the community;

h. enable regional and international collaboration, and support student and staff cross-national mobility;

i. enforce ethical protocols for research, teaching and related activities;

j. facilitate dialogue between the research community, the public and policymakers to link research to 'real world' issues; and

k. improve its contribution to society through published research outcomes and its public engagement activities.

3.2   Governance

The principles of social responsibility are respected throughout the University's policies, strategies, procedures and processes. They permeate all levels, as an integral element of management accountability and stakeholder engagement. The University would establish proper mechanisms to:

a. encourage a culture of social responsibility with high ethical and professional standards and clear protocols to avoid conflict of interest;

b. formally recognize staff and students and involves them as partners in governance and decision-making, providing for their representation on the Council and on its advisory committees;

c. exercise due diligence by assessing the risk and impact of all activities, ensuring compliance with the law, relevant standards and norms;

d. conduct ethical and socially responsible procurement to the extent practical;

e. behave as a responsible neighbour, facilitating dialogue and working in partnership with the local community;

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f. recognize its staff and student social responsibility initiatives (e.g. charitable giving and community outreach) through an internal reward/recognition scheme; and

g. actively participate in relevant social responsibility networks.

3.3 Environmental and societal sustainability

The University is committed to environmental sustainability and biodiversity in its operations as far as practicable, including in its use of goods, services and works, and in its evaluation of decisions. It would take appropriate action(s) to ensure that its commitments are realized and:

a. ensure that its policies and practices minimize any negative impact on the environment caused by its activities or supply chain;

b. promote sustainable development;

c. deliver a continuous improvement programme that works towards cleaner, sustainable, resource-efficient and ethical operations;

d. encourage the use of environmentally friendly technologies and energy-efficient, reusable and biodegradable materials;

e. practise socially responsible and sustainable procurement to the extent practical, and publish a Sustainable Procurement Guide that promotes social responsibility and sustainability wherever it has influence over the supply chain; and

f. ensure respect for and compliance with the rule of law/regulations, code of conduct, conflict of interest policy and anti-corruption/anti-bribery requirements.

3.4 Fair practices

The University ensures equality and fairness for its staff, students and others as appropriate, and that its policies and procedures are intended to avoid discrimination or inequity. The University would pursue the following on a continuous basis:

a. promote diversity and inclusion, and ensures equality regardless of age, culture, ethnicity or gender;

b. Establish and implement open, transparent, fair and equitable staff recruitment and promotion system, using affirmative action where appropriate, and provide suitable opportunities for staff development;

c. Conduct staff communication and consultation on relevant issues, where appropriate;

d. promote the health, safety, physical, social and mental well-being of staff and students;

e. Establish and implement a competitive pay and grading structure, fair pay and reward system, and provide suitable career development and progression opportunities for staff;

f. ensure that working conditions comply with relevant laws and regulations;

g. set out transparent, fair and equitable complaints and disciplinary procedures and ensure that complaints and disciplinary matters are addressed swiftly and fairly;

h. provide professional support services to meet specific needs of students and staff;

i. provide an inclusive experience for non-local students and facilitates international, cultural and intercultural awareness among students, staff and other members of the community; and

j. communicate with suppliers about its procurement policy.

4. Key contacts and questions

The University will ensure that its resources, personnel, procedures and processes are in place to effect this Policy, and the goals for achievement are set as necessary.

If you have any questions or comments about this Policy, please contact us via the email below.

Email: socialresponsbility@hkmu.edu.hk

Responsible Office : FMO
Effective Date   : 1 January 2023