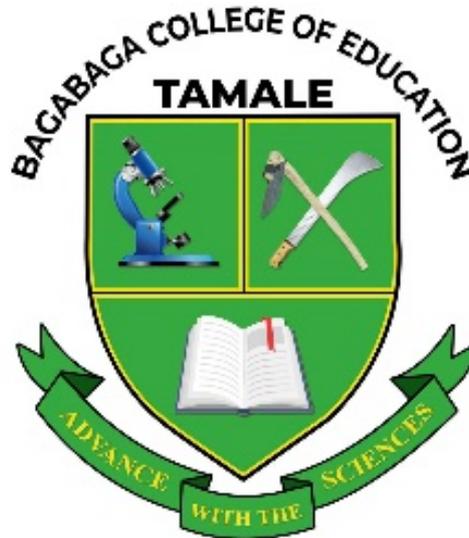


SBAGABAGA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

(BACE)



GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

(GESI) POLICY

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1ST SEPTEMBER, 2022

*Bagabaga College of Education
(GESI policy)*

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this policy document, unless the context otherwise states, the following definitions shall apply:

GESI | Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Able-ism | The belief that disabled individuals are inferior to non-disabled individuals, leading to discrimination toward and oppression of individuals with disabilities and physical differences.

Accessibility | The extent to which a facility is readily approachable and usable by individuals with disabilities, particularly in such areas as the halls of residence, classrooms, and public areas.

Advocate | Someone who speaks up for himself/herself and members of an identity group; e.g. a person who lobbies for equal pay for a specific group. However, an advocate may also speak for a group of which s/he is not a member.

Bias | Prejudice; an inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment.

Disability | An impairment that may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory, or some combination of these. It substantially affects a person's life activities and may be present from birth or occur during a person's lifetime.

Discrimination | The denial of justice and fair treatment by individuals and/or institutions in many areas, including employment, education, housing, banking, and political rights.

Discrimination is an action triggered by prejudiced thinking.

Diversity | The wide variety of shared and different personal and group characteristics among human beings.

Ethnicity | A social construct which divides individuals into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as a shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.

GESI Champion | Someone who coordinates the activities of GESI responsiveness

Inclusion | Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

Social inclusion is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society - **improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.**

Inclusive Language | Refers to non-sexist language or language that “includes” all persons in its references. For example, “a writer needs to proofread his work” excludes females due to the masculine reference of the pronoun. Likewise, “a nurse must disinfect her hands” is exclusive of males and stereotypes nurses as females.

Religion | A system of beliefs, usually spiritual in nature, and often in terms of a formal, organized denomination.

Safe Space | Refers to an environment in which everyone feels comfortable expressing themselves and participating fully, without fear of attack, ridicule or denial of experience.

Social Justice | A broad term for actions intended to create genuine equality, fairness, and respect among peoples.

Culture | Culture is the pattern of daily life learned consciously and unconsciously by a group of people. These patterns can be seen in language, governing practices, arts, customs, holiday celebrations, food, religion, dating rituals, and clothing.

Gender Awareness: A state of knowledge of the differences in roles and relations of women and men and how this results in differences in power relations, status, privileges and needs. It is also the recognition of the differences in the interests, needs and roles of women and men in

society and how they result in differences in power, status and privilege. It also means the ability to identify problems arising from gender inequity and discrimination.

Gender Blind: The situation where potentially differential policy impacts on men and women are ignored

Gender Budget: A budgeting method that analyses the influence of budgets on men and women and girls and boys. Gender budgeting entails analyses of revenue and expenditure impacts so as to avoid or correct gender imbalances.

Gender Discrimination: Differential treatment to individuals on the grounds of gender.

Gender Equality: A situation where women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential; are able to contribute equally to national political, economic, social and cultural development; and benefit equally from the results.

Gender Equity: The fair and just distribution of all means of opportunities and resources between women and men.

Gender Gap: A difference in any aspect of the socio-economic status of women and men, arising from the different social roles ascribed by society for women and men.

Gender Indicator: An indicator that captures gender related changes in society over time and in relation to a norm (Beck, 1999).

Gender Issues: these are issues that arise when the relationships between women and men, their roles, privileges, status, and positions are identified and analysed. Gender issues arise where inequalities and inequities are shown to exist between people purely on the basis of their being female or male.

Gender Mainstreaming: Refers to a process that is goal-oriented. It recognises that most institutions consciously or unconsciously serve the interests of men and encourages institutions to adopt a gender perspective in transforming themselves.

Gender Neutral: The assumption that policies, programmes, and project interventions do not have a gender dimension and therefore affect men and women in the same way. In practice, policies intended to be gender neutral can be gender blind.

Gender Responsive: Refers to a planning process in which programmes and policy actions are developed to deal with and counteract problems which arise out of socially constructed differences between women and men.

Gender Sensitive: The state of knowledge of the socially-constructed differences between women and men, including differences in their needs, as well as to the use of such knowledge to identify and understand the problems arising from such differences and to act purposefully to address them.

Gender Stereotyping: Constant portrayal in the media, the press or in the education system, of women and men occupying certain roles according to the socially constructed gender division of labour and expectations in behaviour.

Gender: refers to the social roles allocated respectively to women and to men in particular societies and at particular times. Such roles, and the differences between them, are conditioned by a variety of political, economic, ideological, and cultural factors and are characterised in most societies by unequal power relations.

Sex: The biological state of being a male or female.

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1.0 BACKGROUND

Communities around the world are made up of a different social group, all of which have different needs, assets, opportunities, and challenges. One way to ensure that these diverse communities are understood and considered is by integrating gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) concepts into the management of all institutions. Bagabaga College of Education as part of the communities of the world providing both educational and social services, standing for policy advocacy, access, complementary education, science, technical and vocational education, quality, gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) sees the need to adopt the GESI policy in the management of the college. The college considers gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) to be part of the work of schools and other educational bodies and therefore, considers the policy instrumental in the growth of the institution.

Of late, it is evidential that involving women in leadership roles in our institutions has played a significant role in institutional advancement. Institutions with more women on their boards perform better with regard to their performance during times of crisis or volatility. This achievement comes as a result of the GESI policy that many institutions have adopted. It is a strategy for providing both women and men with the requisite experiences to work to achieve an objective by integrating and developing, designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. For this reason, Bagabaga college of education's ultimate goal in adopting this policy is to achieve gender equality.

2.0 VISION

To become a Public University of Education in the Training of Professional Teachers.

3.0 MISSION

To train academically sound, competent, and disciplined professional teachers to teach in Ghanaian basic schools.

4.0 CORE VALUES

Our core values are translated into value statements that represent the hallmark of our culture as an institution of higher learning. They will be the enduring tenets that will guide us to achieve our vision and accompanying goals. The core values of the College include integrity, respect, and loyalty.

4.1 Integrity

We will exhibit the highest standards of practice to earn the trust of our stakeholders. We would be committed to knowledge generation that positively impacts the lives of those within and outside our college community.

4.2 Respect

We would provide others with a world-class experience that demonstrates our value for the diversity and contributions of the members of our community.

4.3 Loyalty

We will demonstrate a strong resolve to give back selflessly to the college.

5.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to help achieve gender equality and social inclusion, and freedom from any form of discrimination for all persons, associated with, serving at, and studying at Bagabaga College of Education.

6.0 OBJECTIVES

The GESI policy provides a legitimate point of reference for addressing gender inequalities and exclusion in all the institutional departments, units and by all the stakeholders. The objectives of this policy are to:

- guide and direct planning and allocation of resources with a gender and inclusive perspective
- create a safe and conducive teaching and learning environment for academic excellence for all irrespective of their background, gender, and disability leading to the attainment of academic excellence.
- increase awareness on gender and inclusive responsiveness among top managers who are the decision makers and line managers who are the implementers in all the departments and units.
- strengthen partnerships for advancement of gender equality, equity inclusivity and increased networking in gender and inclusive issues.

6.1 Policy application and stakeholders

The GESI policy applies to the entire College covering all Departments, sections and Units and all college community members and partners. The implementation of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy requires the commitment, participation, and involvement of all key stakeholders (College Council, Management, Staff, Students, and external partners).

7.0 POLICY VALUES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

7.1 Policy Values

- a) BACE is sensitive to gender and inclusive issues and committed to addressing gender and inclusive gaps in enrolment of students and staff recruitment.
- b) Females, males, and persons living with disabilities are to be valued equally in all dimensions of the College's work and provide equitable opportunities for development.
- c) The curriculum delivery shall include inclusive learning experiences leading to universal rights to equality;
- d. BACE is committed to building an all-inclusive academic community which provides the opportunity for all persons to develop their full potentials irrespective of gender, disability, socio-cultural background.
- e) BACE is committed to affirmative action strategies to improve the quality of education for females and persons living with disabilities are based on a recognition that action is required at all levels of the college system to advance females and persons living with disabilities development and achieve gender equality, equity and inclusivity.

8.0 POLICY GOAL ONE

To achieve gender responsive and inclusivity with respect to both academic and administrative staffing and decision-making processes.

8.1 Specific Objectives

To increase the percentage of female senior members from 16% to 30% by 2025.

8.2 Strategies

- a) BACE shall give preference to qualified female applicants and in the recruitment process in situations where both genders perform equally. However, departments where the ratio is already weighed in favour of females, males will be favorably considered.
- b) Departments, sections, and units shall search for qualified females to fill vacant academic and administrative positions.
- c) BACE shall ensure that there is a fair representation of both females and males on all committees and boards.
- d) BACE shall ensure that its policies on staff professional development are fair and non-discriminatory on the basis of gender and disability.
- e) BACE shall ensure its policies are crafted and reviewed from a gender-inclusive inclusive perspective.
- f) Females shall be encouraged to take on higher level responsibilities.
- g) BACE Shall provide a mentoring scheme for females in areas where there is an identified need.

9.0 GOAL TWO

BACE shall be committed to achieving gender parity in enrolment of students.

9.1 Specific Objective

To increase the enrolment of female students from 37% to 50% by 2025.

9.2 Strategies

- a) BACE shall adopt the appropriate concessionary measures in designated disciplines where numbers in a particular gender are unacceptably low.
- b) BACE will undertake advocacy activities to encourage females to apply for admission.
- c) BACE will ensure that most qualified female applicants are shortlisted for admission.

d) BACE will ensure gender equity in the award of scholarships, if there is an opportunity.

10.0 GOAL THREE

BACE will maintain gender-disaggregated data on both staff and students for decision-making purposes.

10.1 Specific Objective

To provide gender-disaggregated data for reporting, monitoring and decision-making purposes.

10.2 Strategies

a) BACE will maintain a gender-disaggregated data of all staff, disaggregated further by departments, sections, and units; and will update these statistics annually and publish it.

b) BACE will maintain a gender-disaggregated statistics of all students, disaggregated further by programmes and level; and will update these statistics annually and publish it.

c) BACE will maintain a database of all members of the academic and administrative staff, specifying their qualifications, experiences, areas of expertise and interest and services to and outside the college.

11.0 GOAL FOUR

BACE shall address gender inclusive issues in the course contents and course materials.

11.1 Specific Objective

To ensure the engendering of the curriculum by making sure content of courses and materials for teaching and learning are gender and inclusive responsive.

11.2 Strategies

a) Encourage the review and restructuring of courses to ensure coverage of gender -inclusive issues.

- b) Promote an environment which is supportive of females and persons living with disabilities in all aspects including teaching and learning processes, classroom management, and organization, the social and cultural and physical environment, values, and attitudes.
- c) BACE will ensure gender-inclusive pedagogy and assessment in all areas of teaching, learning and assessment.
- d) BACE shall ensure gender responsive and inclusive in all activities regarding Supported Teaching in Schools.
- d) BACE will ensure that its annual budget follows the tenets of gender budgeting.

12.0 GOAL FIVE

BACE shall support the development of policy documents from gender-inclusive perspective and the use of gender and inclusive responsive language in all policy documents.

12.1 Specific Objective:

To promote the use of gender and inclusive responsive language used in all:

- a) college documents and policy documents
- b) published documents ascribed to BACE;
- c) information conveyed to students, staff, and applicants for positions in the college and other partners.

12.2 Strategies

The following practices should be observed:

- a) The use of 'man' or 'men' as generic terms to describe both genders should be avoided as much as possible. The use of these terms should be restricted to males. Gender neutral/sensitive terms exist and should be used, for example, 'person', 'people', 'staff', 'personnel';

- b) Plural subjects should be used in case of unspecified gender to avoid awkward use of pronouns. For example, the phrase “Each student should check his or her results” should be expressed “Students should check their results”;
- c) Where it is not relevant, a person's gender should not be mentioned. For example, the phrase “The female referee....” should be expressed “The referee”
- d) Educate the college community on the use of gender -sensitive language.
- e) Encourage the review of the GESI policy documents from a gender perspective.

13.0 GOAL SIX

BACE is committed to ensuring that gender and disability issues are considered and included in grant proposals and projects.

13.1 Specific Objective

To ensure that proposals for funding are gender and inclusive responsive.

Strategies

- a) Project proposals in all fields shall consider the needs of all irrespective of gender, disability, race, religion, or ethnicity with emphasis on female's training and capacity-building.
- b) Monitoring and evaluation of projects should identify the impact of all especially females and persons with disabilities.

BACE shall establish a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Mainstreaming committee that shall be inclusive in nature to implement activities of the policy. The gender focal person shall be the secretary of the committee. The GESI mainstreaming committee shall ensure effective implementation and linkage with other GENDER AND INCLUSIVE related policies and frameworks of the College.

14.0 GOAL SEVEN

BACE shall be committed to ensuring that the college infrastructure is GESI responsive.

14.1 Specific Objective

Expanding and improving infrastructure to be GESI responsive.

14.2 Strategies

- a) Rehabilitating walkways on existing college infrastructure to be gender and disability friendly including changing rooms.
- c) BACE shall be committed to ensuring that all new infrastructural projects are gender and disability friendly.
- d) Improving quality of students' and staff' desks to be GESI responsive.
- e) Address infrastructure issues and work towards attainment of 50/50 enrolment target and increase of enrolment of other under-represented groups.
- f. Ensure prioritization of female accommodation needs.

15.0 GOAL EIGHT

BACE shall be committed to influencing attitudes, behaviors and practice through communications and advocacy.

15.1 Specific Objective

To promote GESI responsive language used by all.

15.2 Strategies

- a) Continuous sensitization and education to all college community on GESI responsive language.

- b) Promote GESI-responsive communication as a common responsibility for all in the college environment and build skills for various sections of college constituents for effective GESI communication including public advocacy
- c) Build skills for various sections of college for effective constituents GESI communication including public advocacy through continues sensitization and training.
- d) Through gender club activities to promote GESI
- e) Continuous professional development sessions on implementation of College GESI Policy

16.0 POLICY INTERPRETATION AND AUTHORITY

- i. This Policy shall take precedence over all other previous, guidelines and procedures, relating to GESI mainstreaming previously approved and/or issued by the BACE Council.
- ii. This Policy shall, however, not override any Act, Statutory Instrument, Instructions, or guidelines issued by the Government of Ghana from time to time.
- iii. The established GESI Mainstreaming committee with the guidance from the College legal officer shall provide the necessary technical support to the officer in charge who shall have the power to give interpretation or guidance on any matter, paragraph, clause, or terminology in this policy that is deemed to be misleading, ambiguous or whose meaning is not clear or not clearly understandable to any person, group, or section of users.
- iv. In case of any doubts of the Accounting Officer's interpretation, the final recourse for interpretation of any matter, paragraph, clause, or terminology shall be with the BACE Council through the appropriate committee(s).
- v. The College Council shall from time to time, when deemed necessary, issue new GESI related guidelines to fill the gaps in this policy.

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17.0 BACE GESI COMMITTEE

There shall be a GESI committee in the College composed of representation from various constituents of the college as shall be determined from time to time.

17.1 Composition of GESI committee

- Vice principal
- Quality Assurance Officer
- Student Affairs officer
- GESI champion
- College Secretary
- STS coordinator
- 2 representatives of CETAG (Female and Male)
- 2 Representatives of CENTSAG (Female and Male)
- 2 SRC representatives (female and Male)
- Project work coordinator

17.2 Roles of the GESI Committee

- Make proposals and recommendations for GESI responsive BACE programs and activities.
- Ensure that GESI responsive budgeting is provided for in the overall BACE plans
- Disseminating GESI focused information to BACE stakeholders;
- Offer technical guidance and awareness to managers, staff, and students of BACE on how best to integrate GESI in their work;
- Contribute to resource mobilization to facilitate GESI mainstreaming in BACE
- Guiding and supporting other BACE constituencies and stake holders on GESI education linkages;

- Evaluating progress made in mainstreaming GESI into BACE work and developing follow-up and corrective actions;
- Reporting to BACE Management through the College Secretary on the progress of work on GESI
- Establishing alliances and strategic partnerships with other GESI-focused organizations.
- To receive complaints of discrimination based on GESI.
- Carry out investigations of the situation of discrimination in and around BACE
- to inform decision making
- Institute mechanisms to address Gender-Based Violence (GBV) against students and staff.
- Establish a staff and student forum for periodic dialoguing on the situations of GESI mainstreaming at BACE.
- Regular and timely monitoring of the operationalization of the GESI policy and associated implementation strategies

17.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Gender Committee shall develop and share tools for gender mainstreaming such as the baseline tools for collecting gender disaggregated data that will inform implementation. The committee will have a monitoring and evaluation framework with clear gender indicators for tracking performance. The following are some of the GESI indicators that shall be continuously monitored for the promotion of GESI mainstreaming:

- Student enrolment, retention, and completion of programs across all academic disciplines
- Staff recruitment and retention across all levels of employments.
- Responsive and Inclusive Student Engagement
- Supported teachings in Schools Activities
- Gender based sexual violence among students and staff
- Research and innovation findings

- Gender Responsive and inclusive pedagogy and Assessment
- Gender and inclusive service delivery
- GESI responsive budgeting

The BACE GESI Policy shall be reviewed in line with the College strategic plan. The GESI mainstreaming committee shall submit proposals for amendment to the College Governing Council through College Management.

18.0 COMPLAINTS AND REPORTING PROCESS

- i. It is the obligation of all members of the College community to report incidents of discrimination or based on gender or Disability.
- ii. This policy shall provide a prompt, thorough, confidential and respectful process for handling and investigating complaints of discrimination based on Gender or Disability.
- iii. Any complaint of gender or disability discrimination shall be reported to the most immediate supervisor who shall then forward the complaint to the GESI committee
- iv. Where the immediate supervisor is the suspect of Gender or Disability discrimination, reporting should be made to the GESI committee.
- v. All persons who believe they have been discriminated against shall file a written complaint.

19.0 TIME FRAME AND MONITORING

This policy has identified eight (8) goals with implementation strategies. The strategies serve as guidelines. The college, departments, sections, and units may use other strategies where appropriate to achieve the objectives in line with the GESI Goals.

To ensure that the policy is implemented and makes a meaningful impact:

- a. The College's Gender Equality and Social Inclusion committee together with College Management shall ensure that the policy is implemented in the different departments, sections and units of the college.
- b. Indicators for measuring the progress of policy objectives will be developed by the GESI Committee together with college Management.
- c. Achievements will be monitored and reported annually.
- d. The policy will be disseminated through sensitization activities organized by College Management and the GESI Committee to College community. The policy document will be made available to all in soft and hard copies, in the College Library, Departments, sections, units and Offices.

20.0 POLICY REVIEW

This Policy may be reviewed upon a written request made by any staff of the College to the Principal. The request or appeal shall be referred to the Academic Board for consideration. It may also be reviewed after every five (5) years with effect from the date the policy came into force.

21.0 TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

The provisions of this policy do not prejudice any rights/obligations or any other privilege(s) of a person who immediately prior to the coming into force of this policy.

22.0 COMMENCEMENT

This policy shall be deemed to have come into force on the **19th day of December 2024.**