  **Employment Equity @ Rhodes**

In its Equity Policy, Rhodes University argues that:

1. Equity must be recognised as an integral component of the future of the University. Diversity will make Rhodes University a more dynamic, stronger and more effective institution; and
2. The goals of quality and equity are not mutually exclusive and that diversity will strengthen the quality of Rhodes.

The benefits of a diverse support staff[[1]](#footnote-1) include:

* Different perspectives to inform operational and management practices;
* Diversity of language with a greater facility to talk to staff in their home language;
* The ability to create a supportive environment for all students and staff, irrespective of their background with staff who understand their particular cultural, socio-economic and political backgrounds;
* Providing role-models for the diversity of students at Rhodes University; -
* The need to balance the composition of staff in terms of educational qualifications and background, experience, seniority, race, gender, age, and disability; and
* An active demonstration of the institution’s commitment to transformation and to better reflect the demographics of the country.

The University’s position on the matter of quality and equity is that these concepts are not mutually exclusive and that diversity strengthens the quality of the institution. The selection of staff will be consistent with the requirements of the Employment Equity Act and the University strategies.

At Rhodes University, a differentiation is made between equity and equality, with a focus on the implementation of equity. Equity refers to fairness and justice whereas equality is understood to mean treating everyone the same. It is recognized that equality of treatment may result in the further entrenching of disadvantage of certain groups. This in turn, fails to recognize the history and context of South Africa.

On a more practical level, equity is pursued in the recruitment and selection processes for support staff posts as follows:

1. The **requirements/criteria for the post** are identified at the outset of the process and articulated in the job profile for the post. At the outset, the Committee will also explore how employment equity will impact this process. For example: (i) What particular designated[[2]](#footnote-2) group/s will be given preference[[3]](#footnote-3) in this process at the short-listing and selection decision? (ii) What will be done to recruit suitably qualified individual from these demographic groups? This all takes place prior to advertising of the process. These requirements are used consistently throughout the recruitment and selection process;
2. In considering the **recruitment strategies** for a vacant post, the media and related strategies used must bring the job opportunity to the attention of all demographic groups. Where the Selection Committee is concerned that there may not be quality applicants from all demographic groups using the available media, a **Search Committee** may be used to identify such applicants;
3. During the selection process, all **applicants** within each stage of the selection process **must be assessed using the same techniques**. Care is taken to ensure that the techniques used are **not culturally or gender biased**. Where a member of a designated group is not yet suitably qualified, **consideration is given to the potential** of the applicant to meet the job requirements in a reasonable period of time;
4. In promoting the diversity of the institution, the **employment of internationals** is important. Such employment will take place within the legislative framework of South Africa; and
5. Where applicants from designated groups are not suitably qualified, **reasons** for this must be clearly stated.

For a more complete coverage of these issues, Appendix 1 of the Recruitment and Selection Policy for Academic Posts can be consulted.

1. Support staff refers to staff who are not academics. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Designated groups as per the Employment Equity Act are: African, Coloured, Indian, women and disabled. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Preference is applied as follows: All candidates need to meet the requirements for the post i.e. candidates need to be suitably qualified. Where candidates from the preferred demographic group/s are suitably qualified, they are given preference for appointment. The preference for candidates is influenced by the statistics of the Economically Active Population of South Africa which are approximately as follows:

   |  |  |  |  |  |
   | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
   | **A** | **C** | **I** | **W** | **Female** |
   | 74.9% | 10.8% | 3% | 11.3% | 45,2% |

   In the case of academic staff at Rhodes University, there is a paucity of Black academic staff (i.e. African, Coloureds and Indians) and preference will be given to the employment of suitably qualified staff from these categories. (Last updated October 2014 ) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)