

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1. Scope and purpose of the policy

- 1.1 Promoting equality, valuing diversity and fostering inclusion are fundamental to our mission.
- 1.2 The principles of inclusiveness, tolerance and fairness underpin our Association.
- 1.3 This policy exists to ensure equal access to the employment and service opportunities that are available in every dimension of our activities.
- 1.4 We will not accept unfair discrimination or less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity or trade union activity (see section 6 for definitions) as an employer or in the running of the association.
- 1.5 This policy is fully supported by the Trustees and Executive Director who have given clear direction and leadership that promoting equality and diversity is a priority.
- 1.6 The commitments in this policy underpin all other Association policies

2. Policy Aims

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is to create an organisation where;
 - Decisions are fair and based on merit, competence, and potential
 - In our work we take account of individuals' experiences and needs
 - Discrimination and exclusionary practices will not be tolerated
- 2.2 We understand that to do this we will need to address the root causes and impacts of stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as the indirect discrimination that can unintentionally arise from policies, practices and procedures.
- 2.3 Through this policy we also aim to;
 - Attract and retain members, supporters, staff, volunteers, Trustees, contractors, consultants and visitors that reflect the diverse communities in which we operate and who are committed to our core values of equity and inclusion.
 - Build an organisational culture that is open and inclusive and where people feel safe, where differences are accepted, engagement is apparent and the contributions of all are encouraged, valued and respected
 - Integrate equality, diversity and inclusion into every aspect of our activities including employment, fundraising, funding, marketing, publishing, events and procurement so that we can meet the needs of all our stakeholders

3. Policy Implementation

- 3.1 In order to translate this policy into action we will;

- a. Engage with, and learn from our stakeholders in the development and delivery of an Equality Roadmap and Action Plan and on our work more broadly
- b. Monitor and collect evidence on the impact of our policies, practices, procedures and workplace cultures on equality issues
- c. Implement tailored positive actions to respond to the evidence we collect
- d. Levelling the playing field for disabled people through the provision of reasonable adjustments for disabled individuals
- e. Train our staff and volunteers, including Trustees and consultants working with the Association for more than a month to carry out this policy and embed equality principles into all relevant training including induction
- f. Communicate this policy to all our stakeholders so that they are aware of our commitment to treat them fairly and their obligation to operate in line with this policy
- g. Take appropriate action when incidents occur which breach this policy (see section 7)
- h. Regularly monitor and review the success of this policy in promoting equality and evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of our action plan.

4. Legal Duties

4.1 The Equality Act 2010 replaced a number of existing anti-discrimination laws to simplify and strengthen equality law, removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply.

4.2 This policy is the instrument through which we comply with our obligations as an employer and a service provider (an organisation is a service provider if it provides goods, facilities or services to the general public or section of it, regardless of whether these are free or paid for. The Association is therefore a service provider) as set out in the Act. As such all our stakeholders need to understand the protections and obligations conferred on them by the Act.

4.3 The purpose of the Act is that everyone has the right to be treated fairly at work or when using services. It protects people from discrimination by employers and service providers on the basis of nine protected characteristics;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex/Gender
- Sexual orientation

4.4 Trade union representatives and members also have legal protection against unfair treatment on the ground of trade union activity. We will not treat employees unfairly on the grounds of trade union membership or non-membership. Unfair treatment includes dismissal and subjecting employees to detrimental treatment. We respect the right of staff to join a trade union of their choosing if they so wish.

4.5 The Equality Act protects our members, staff, volunteers, Trustees, contractors, consultants and visitors against;

Direct discrimination: This occurs where, because of a protected characteristic, a person receives worse treatment than someone who does not have that characteristic. For example: a member is turned down for a workshop grant because the assessors believe their disability will prevent them from organising it effectively. However, different treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if you can justify it, i.e. if you can demonstrate that it is a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim. Age is the only protected characteristic that allows employers to justify direct discrimination.

Discrimination by association: This is discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. For example a man is treated less favourably at an event because of his friendship with an individual who is transgender.

Perception discrimination: This is discrimination against an individual because others think (incorrectly) that they possess a protected characteristic. For example an employee is not offered the chance to represent her company at a major event because her line manager believes she has mental health issues.

Indirect discrimination: This occurs when there is a policy or a practice that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic compared with people who do not have that characteristic. For example including unnecessary criteria in a person specification that could increase the barriers for those with certain characteristics to applying.

Harassment: This is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual (See UACES's Code of Conduct).

Victimisation: This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than someone else because they have complained about discrimination, or are suspected of doing so or have supported someone else who has.

4.6 Disabled people are specifically protected against discrimination 'arising from disability'. For example they would be protected from an employer penalising them from taking regular comfort breaks to manage chronic pain when they would reasonably be expected to know that the employee has a disability. This type of discrimination is only justifiable if an employer can show that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

4.7 Disabled people also have a legal right to reasonable adjustments from their service provider or employer. For example, through the provision of specific software, furniture or lighting.

4.8 A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled.

4.9 Finally, it would be discrimination to treat transgender people less favourably for being absent from work because they are undergoing gender reassignment than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured.

4.10 We expect our staff, volunteers, Trustees, contractors, consultants and visitors to behave in accordance with the above provisions.

4.11 We will make our commitment to equality clear in our working with members, supporters and donors.

5 Definitions and Further Explanations

This policy is based on the following definitions and explanations.

Disability is defined by the Equality Act as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Long-term means has lasted, or is expected to last, for 12 months.

Included in this definition are:

- Physical impairments (including asthma, diabetes, epilepsy etc.)
- Sensory impairments such as hearing impairment or visual impairment
- Severe facial disfigurement
- Progressive conditions such as cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV infection
- People who have had impairment in the past but have since recovered (such as cancer, mental health issues).
- The Association supports the social model of disability that states that disability is created by society's barriers and not by particular medical conditions or impairments. Removing these barriers, which hinder people who have impairments, can therefore reduce disability.

Barriers can be:

- Prejudice and stereotypes
- Inflexible organisational procedures and practices
- Inaccessible information
- Inaccessible building
- Inaccessible transport

Diversity: is used to describe the process of valuing differences in individuals' attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic background, sexuality, skills, knowledge and life experiences. Diversity recognises and celebrates difference as something which is positive and beneficial to us all.

Equality: is about making sure that people are treated fairly and given fair chances. It is not about treating everyone the same. Achieving equality of outcomes means meeting different needs in

different ways. When mentioned in policies the word equality usually implies a focus on those characteristics covered by legislation.

Equity: This means that the exercise of human rights leads to outcomes which are fair and just.

Gay/Lesbian: emotionally and sexually attracted to people of the same sex. The term gay is most commonly applied to men. The term usually applied to women who are sexually and emotionally attracted to other women is lesbian.

Gender: refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. It also refers to the relations between men and women, girls and boys and those between women and those between men.

Gender Mainstreaming: means ensuring that women's and men's concerns and experiences are integrated into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of our strategies, policies, programmes, projects and workplace culture. The aim of gender mainstreaming is gender equality; an outcome where women's and men's rights and needs are recognised and addressed.

Gender Reassignment: a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process to change their sex. To qualify for protection from discrimination a transsexual person does not have to show that they are under medical supervision.

Homosexual: A more official term for people who are sexually and emotionally attracted to members of the same sex. Not so commonly used by lesbian, gay and bisexual people to describe themselves.

Mainstreaming: the seamless integration of equalities issues into the policy making and service delivery process – planning, development, implementation and evaluation. And a way to ensure that promoting equality is not reliant on the commitment of a few individuals but part and parcel of our everyday business.

Monitoring: for equality data to check if people with protected characteristics are participating and being treated equally. For example, monitoring the representation of women, or disabled people, in the workforce or at senior levels within organisations.

Positive Action: a range of lawful actions that seek to overcome or minimise disadvantages (e.g. in employment opportunities) that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs.

Positive Discrimination: Treating someone with a protected characteristic more favourably to counteract the effects of past discrimination. It is generally not lawful although the duty to make reasonable adjustments is an exception where treating a disabled person more favourably may be required by law.

Race: Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. It includes Anglo-Roma Gypsies, Irish, Scottish and Welsh Travellers.

Reasonable Adjustment: Where a disabled person is at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled, there is a duty to take reasonable steps to remove that

disadvantage by (i) changing provisions, criteria or practices, (ii) altering, removing or providing a reasonable alternative means of avoiding physical features and (iii) providing auxiliary aids.

Religion or Belief: includes any religion and lack of religion, in other words individuals are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or a lack of such belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.

Sex: refers to whether a person is a man or a woman (of any age).

Sexual Orientation: Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Stereotyping: making assumptions about an individual or group based on a particular attribute.

Transsexual Person: a person who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. This may be a woman who has transitioned or is transitioning to be a man, or a man who has transitioned or is transitioning to be a woman. The law does not require a person to undergo a medical procedure to be recognised as a transsexual.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The Association Committee responsibility is to;

Own and monitor implementation of this policy

6.2 Our EDI Officer's responsibility is to;

- Act as an equality champion and role model
- Act as the primary focal point for consultation on the implementation of the EDI Policy and associated Equality Roadmap and Action Plan, along with other EDI related issues
- Implement this policy and integrate EDI considerations into the work of the Association
- Lead the EDI Working Group
- Lead on the three year review of the EDI Policy and associated EDI Roadmap and Action Plan, drawing on the EDI Working Group
- Formulate the corresponding EDI Roadmap and Action Plan together with the EDI Working Group and oversee its implementation
- Create and deliver initiatives that will translate this policy into positive action
- Set up effective systems to ensure that positive action on equality is continuously evaluated and improved

6.3 The EDI Working Group's responsibility is to;

- Support the EDI Officer in the development of the EDI Action Plan to implement this policy
- Monitor and review the implementation of the EDI Action Plan at the direction of the EDI Officer
- Contribute to the three year review of the EDI Action Plan
- Respond to EDI related issues brought to the working group's attention by the Executive Director, Staff or Trustees in a constructive manner

6.4 The Association Executive Director's responsibility is to;

- Take responsibility for delivery of this policy
- Provide strong leadership on EDI through the implementation of the EDI Roadmap
- Drive delivery of the EDI Action Plan
- Work closely with the EDI Officer, EDI Working Group and UACES Committee to monitor progress on the delivery of the EDI Roadmap through its associated Action Plan
- Ensure staff and volunteers are fully aware of their individual and collective responsibilities under this policy and the 2010 Equality Act
- Prioritise attendance at equality training to equip staff, volunteers and consultants working with us for over a month with the competences needed to comply with this policy and deliver the action plan
- Respond to allegations of discrimination and harassment fairly, quickly and effectively
- Provide equality induction, equality training and other development opportunities to build equality competence and ensure all are attended
- Produce timely, accurate and appropriate equality management information on staff and volunteers, including the Committee, to inform decision-making
- Investigate and deal promptly with any incidents or individual behaviours that contravene this policy
- Ensure all contractors and consultants are given a copy of the EDI policy and an assessment of their commitment to complying with the policy forms part of any formal tendering process.
- Build specific actions into their team and individual's goals that contribute to the delivery of this policy as part of the organisational, individual and project planning processes
- Support staff, volunteers and consultants to prioritise delivery of the equality action plan
- Check that staff, volunteers and consultants are aware of this policy and understand their rights and responsibilities contained within it
- Role model behaviour that supports this policy and challenge those they manage to do the same
- Allocate their time and support and any training or development opportunities objectively, fairly and without discrimination
- Communicate regularly with staff and volunteers about equality issues in a way that keeps this policy and its action plan live and central to our mission

6.5 All staff have a responsibility to;

- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Report discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment that they experience or witness
- Help identify discriminatory practices or procedures and bring these to the attention of Executive Director, Chair, EDI Officer, and/or union representatives
- Contribute to creating an inclusive learning environment that values difference
- Attend mandatory staff training and development events
- Express opinions constructively with sensitivity and respect
- Support the work of the EDI Working Group when required
- Play an active part in delivering the EDI Action Plan

- Consult with the EDI Officer where necessary on the implementation of the EDI Action Plan or on EDI related issues.

6.6 Our Trustees' roles are to

- Support the implementation of this policy and integrate equality into the work of the Association
- Play their part in creating an environment where people are valued and respected
- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Report discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment that they experience or witness
- Help identify discriminatory practices or procedures and bring these to the attention of the Executive Director or EDI Officer
- Attend EDI training and development activities
- Express opinions constructively with sensitivity and respect
- Support the work of the EDI Roadmap and Working Group when required
- Play an active part in delivering the EDI Action Plan
- Consult with the EDI Officer where necessary on the implementation of the EDI Action Plan or on EDI related issues.

6.7 Our members' roles are to

- Play their part in creating an environment where people are valued and respected
- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Report discrimination, bullying, unfair treatment or harassment that they experience or witness in line with the Complaints Policy
- Help identify discriminatory practices or procedures and bring these to our attention
- Express opinions constructively with sensitivity and respect

6.8 Our service providers', contractors' and consultants' responsibility is to operate within the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the terms of this policy. A copy of this EDI Policy will be given to all contractors and consultants and an assessment of their commitment to complying will form part of any formal tendering process.

7 Monitoring and Implementation

7.1 Ultimate responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy and associated EDI Action Plan rests with the EDI Officer and EDI Working Group. However each and every individual involved in the Association needs to play their part in translating policy into practice.

7.2 On a day-to-day basis breaches of this policy could occur at a number of levels some requiring a more urgent response than others.

7.3 If staff, trustees or volunteers find examples of indirect discrimination in the Association policies and procedures you should bring this to the attention of your line manager and / or the Union, and/or Executive Director and/or Chair and/or trustees and/or EDI Officer. They can then consider the issue and respond as appropriate.

- 7.4 Members, supporters, contractors, consultants and visitors should speak to, their named contact at the Association, the nearest member of staff, or use the existing feedback process depending on the seriousness and urgency of the issue.
- 7.5 Should staff, trustees, members or volunteers experience or witness more severe breaches of this policy, including involving direct discrimination against an individual or bullying and harassment then they should refer to UACES's complaints policy and procedure.
- 7.6 We will take action where needed to address any inequalities that are surfaced through the implementation of this policy.
- 7.7 The EDI Policy, the EDI Roadmap and its associated Action Plan will reviewed every three years. The review will be led by the EDI Officer drawing on the EDI working group, and the results will be presented to the full Executive Committee. The review will focus on progress against key objectives, identifying challenges to delivery and devising ways to overcome these as well as checking that the policy aims and actions remain relevant. Additionally, the EDI officer will carry out a yearly assessment of the Association's progress on actions included in the Action Plan. The Report will be presented to the Officers and the Executive Committee at the beginning of each academic year.

8 UACES Policies that Support Equality and Diversity

- 8.1 Although the principles set out in this policy underlie all our policies at UACES, for staff, consultants and contractors, volunteers, trustees and members, it should be particularly be read in conjunction with the following policies:
- Recruitment
 - Flexible working
 - Leave for personal reasons
 - Maternity / Paternity / Adoption
 - Retirement
 - Members' Code of Conduct
 - Complaints policy
 - Dignity at work
 - Transgender issues
 - Personal relationships at work
 - Public interests disclosure
 - Plagiarism procedure
 - Safeguarding policy
 - Volunteer policy
 - Graduate forum code of conduct
 - JCER Editors code of conduct
 - Trustee code of conduct