

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Bradford on Avon u3a is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members in their third age to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members of each u3a draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from each other (peer to peer learning).

Bradford on Avon u3a recognises that some people are particularly likely to experience discrimination and harassment and are committed to making sure that the u3a is as inclusive and welcoming as possible.

Aims of this policy

This policy has been drawn up to comply with the Equality Act 2010. The Act stipulates that organisations cannot treat someone unfairly on the basis of what it calls 'protected characteristics', which are:

- ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race
- age
- disability
- religion or belief (including the absence of belief)
- marital or civil partnership status
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy
- gender reassignment
- sex

Bradford on Avon u3a will strive to ensure that members do not experience discrimination on the basis of their protected characteristics. This will include ensuring equal access to groups and behaviour between members and by Bradford on Avon u3a Committee Members and group leaders.

The Equality Act highlights that organisations need to consider what '**reasonable adjustments**' can be made in order to accommodate those who may have particular needs. Bradford on Avon u3a Committee will review the reasonable adjustments needed for all members and individual members with particular needs on an ongoing basis. Where necessary, the Committee will seek guidance and additional support from the u3aPlus sub-committee and/or National Office.

Practical approaches to inclusion

Bradford on Avon u3a will keep all policies accessible via the website and make sure all new members are aware this is where they are kept, as well as the Member Code of Conduct.

New and existing members will be encouraged to contact any member of the u3a committee if they have any concerns or questions about accessing meetings, activities and events, or require further reasonable adjustments to be taken to enable them to attend such meetings, events and activities. The reasonable adjustments and practical steps may include:

- Consideration given to the time of day of meetings and their location.
- Consideration of venues for meetings including:
 - Accessible to wheelchair users
 - Access to PA system and a hearing loop
 - Parking and disabled parking available
 - Disabled toilet facilities available

The committee will aim to make all communications available to those who don't have access to the internet, and aims to use a range of images in their communications that reflect the local community. The committee will monitor membership statistics i.e. the numbers of members who join, re-join and leave each year in order to identify any trends in membership

In addition the committee will annually consider and action as needed the following steps to help ensure Bradford on Avon u3a is open and accessible to all;

- offer induction and training around equality, diversity and inclusion to Committee Members and Group Leaders on an ongoing basis.
- recruit new members by hosting outreach sessions and encouraging members who are representative of the groups who are underrepresented within the u3a i.e. men or younger members to assist with the recruitment process
- manage growth so that we ensure that new members can be accommodated
- ensure a range of people get their voices heard by encouraging more members to take on roles such as leading groups and joining the committee.

Dealing with discrimination and harassment

Where Bradford on Avon u3a Committee becomes aware of any discriminatory practice or harassment, the committee will seek to address this through consultation with all parties concerned and, where necessary, through invoking our formal disciplinary procedures.

If any member of Bradford on Avon u3a feels they have experienced or witnessed discriminatory behaviour or harassment, this should be reported to the Committee. Any matters of concern will be reviewed by the Committee and a decision will be made, in line with the u3a's constitution and formal procedures, as to what steps will be taken to address the issue.

Definitions

Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents and believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, when or whom they were born, or because of other characteristics. Promoting equality is about behaving in a way that tackles inequalities, aiming to ensure that all members are treated fairly, and do not experience discrimination.

Promoting diversity is about recognising that everyone is different and creating an environment that values members and ensuring that the u3a Movement is as accessible as possible to different groups within the community.

Inclusion is about positively striving to meet the needs of different people and taking practical steps to ensure members feel respected.

Direct Discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably because of their ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race, age, disability, religion or belief (including the absence of belief), marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender reassignment, political belief.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a condition or requirement is applied equally to all groups of people but has a disproportionately adverse effect on one particular group.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to 'protected characteristics' that has the purpose or effect of violating a members dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment is also unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has that same purpose or effect.

Victimisation occurs when a member is treated less favourably than others in the same circumstances because he or she has made a complaint or an allegation of discrimination, harassment or bullying or given information regarding such a complaint or allegation.

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