



Equality and Diversity

Equality and Diversity is the current term used for Equal Opportunities

What is Equality? (Equal rights and treatment to all individuals)

Equality is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are treated fairly and equally and no less favourably, specific to their needs, including areas of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age.

Promoting equality should remove discrimination in all of the aforementioned areas.

Bullying, harassment or victimization are also considered as equality and diversity issues.

What is Diversity? (Difference from what is normal or expected)

Diversity aims to recognise, respect and values people's differences to contribute and realise their full potential by promoting an inclusive culture. Valuing the differences between people and the ways in which those differences can contribute to a richer, more creative and more productive working environment.

Types of Discrimination

- **Positive** – Giving advantage to groups i.e. ethnic, sex, disability, etc.
- **Direct** – Treating somebody less favourable on the grounds of their sex, race, etc. eg, bullying, harassment or exclusion
- **Indirect** – Applying an apparently general rule which in practice disadvantages one sex, race, etc.

How can we promote Equality and Diversity?

- Treating all staff and students fairly
- Creating an inclusive culture for all staff.
- Ensuring equal access to opportunities to enable all to fully participate
- Enabling all to develop to their full potential
- Equipping staff with the skills to challenge inequality and discrimination within their work environment.
- Making certain that any learning material/equipment does not discriminate against any individuals or groups.
- Ensuring policies, procedures and processes don't discriminate



Legislations relevant to Equality and Diversity

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Race Relations Act 1976 Amendment 2003
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employments Equality (Age) Regulations, which is Age Discrimination Act
- Equality Bill 2008/2009
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003



Protected Characteristics

Age

This refers to adults of all ages. For example, an employer could not refuse someone a job because they thought they were too young to take on the responsibility, or too old to learn new skills.

Disability

This refers to physical and/or mental impairments, which have a substantial effect on the person's ability to perform day-to-day activities. For example, someone could not be denied entry to a café because they are visually impaired, or you could not disallow someone to join a football club because they have bipolar disorder.

Gender Reassignment

This refers to someone who is in the process of transitioning from one gender to another. People who have undergone gender reassignment are entitled to be known by their chosen name and gender.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Civil partners are entitled to the same rights as married couples. For example, if an employer's policy were to allow staff to take their husband/wife away on business trips then this would apply to those in civil partnerships.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Pregnancy refers to the time when the baby is unborn; maternity refers to the period after birth. Women cannot be discriminated against because of this characteristic; this refers to both maternity leave and breastfeeding. New mothers cannot be denied promotion or training opportunities because of their maternity status.

Race

This refers to a group of people defined by their nationality, colour, ethnicity and citizenship or national origins. No one can receive unequal treatment because of his or her race. Examples of discrimination based on race include a landlord who might want to deny someone housing because of their race, or a restaurant stating only one ethnic group can work there.

Religion and Belief

This includes philosophical beliefs, such as choosing not to follow any religion or following a vegan lifestyle. Examples of discrimination based on religion and belief could include a youth club stating only Christian children are welcome, or a Catholic school stating only Catholic teachers can work there.

Sex

This refers to being either a man or woman. No one can be denied rights because of their sex. An example of sex discrimination would be advertising manual work as being only available to men, or advertising care work as being only available to women.

Sexual Orientation

This refers to who a person is sexually attracted toward, e.g. the opposite sex, his or her own sex or persons of either sex. An example of discrimination would include a B&B that only allows heterosexual couples to stay in their rooms.