



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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US Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction and Background

The United Synagogue is dedicated to equality, diversity, and inclusion. We aim to create a fair, respectful workplace that welcomes everyone and values each contribution, recognising that diversity strengthens our organisation. As an equal opportunities' employer, we are committed to providing services and practices free from discrimination.

Purpose

This policy aims to make sure that nobody is treated less favourably because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or beliefs, sex, or sexual orientation. It also ensures that no one faces unfair conditions unrelated to job performance, and protects everyone from victimisation, bullying, or harassment.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of staff, volunteers, honorary officers, trustees, contractors, consultants, all third parties and others, authorised to undertake work on behalf of the United Synagogue across the organisation.

If unsure about any aspect of this policy, ask your line manager or Director for guidance.

Associated Policies

This policy works in conjunction with a range of other policies designed to support fairness, inclusion, safety, and respectful behaviour throughout the Charity. Collectively, these policies ensure a consistent commitment to promoting equality and preventing discrimination.

- [Family Friendly Policy](#)
- [Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Safeguarding Policies](#)
- [Whistleblowing Policy](#)
- [Dignity At Work Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Sexual Harassment Policy](#)
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Legal Framework

The main law governing equality and diversity in the workplace in the UK is the [Equality Act 2010](#). It provides protection against discrimination in employment and other areas of life.

Equality Act 2010 – Key Features

Protected Characteristics

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership

- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

Prohibited Conduct

- **Direct discrimination.** Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination.** Applying a policy that disadvantages people with a protected characteristic.
- **Harassment.** Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- **Victimisation.** Treating someone badly because they made or supported a complaint under the Act.

Employer Duties

- Prevent discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees.
- Ensure that all positive action is undertaken in accordance with Sections 158–159 Equality Act 2010.

Other Relevant Legislation and Bodies

Human Rights Act 1998 Provides broader human rights protections.

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) The independent body that oversees and enforces equality law in Great Britain.

Statement of Principle

We are committed to actively promoting diversity, fairness, and inclusion, making sure our staff, volunteers, and others, feel respected and appreciated. Our goal is to help every person in our organisation achieve their best. ‘Inclusion’ ensures that all individuals can be themselves at work and feel that their contributions are valued. ‘Diversity’ refers to embracing the unique differences within our workforce. ‘Fairness’ acknowledges that certain groups face more barriers than others and seeks to remove these obstacles to ensure equal opportunities for everyone.

Responsibilities for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Everyone within our organisation plays a vital role in encouraging equality, promoting inclusion, and preventing discrimination. The specific responsibilities are outlined below:

Managers

Managers are expected to set a positive example, maintain high standards, and make sure their teams comply with this policy. Their duties include integrating equal opportunity principles into daily routines, supporting staff members, and addressing any issues or breaches quickly.

Employees

All employees should treat colleagues, service users, and others with dignity and respect, supporting the organisation's commitment to diversity, fairness, and inclusion. They must understand this policy, report any instances of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation, and help create an inclusive work environment.

HR

The HR team is responsible for developing, sharing, and updating all policies and procedures related to staff, to ensure they encourage equal opportunities and prevent discrimination. HR offers advice and training, assists managers and staff in resolving concerns, and ensures the organisation complies with relevant laws.

Trustees

Trustees oversee the strategic execution of this policy and make sure the organisation remains accountable for achieving its goals around equality, diversity, and inclusion. They guarantee legal standards are met, promote a culture of fairness, and regularly review progress.

By fulfilling these roles, we make certain that our people-related policies and practices reinforce our commitment to equal opportunities, creating a fairer and more inclusive workplace for everyone.

Our Commitment

Age

We will:

- Ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that people are given equal access to our employment, training, development, and promotion opportunities.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability

We will:

- Provide any reasonable adjustments including anticipatory duty and digital accessibility, to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities.
- If we feel that a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will discuss this with you and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people.
- Continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting, and sign language interpretation.
- If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition, so that we can support you as appropriate.
- Keep the physical features of our premises under review, to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.
- Commitment to WCAG 2.2 AA standards for digital materials.

Race

We will:

- Challenge racism wherever it occurs and respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents.

- Actively promote race equality and inclusion in the Charity.
- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone.
- Offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay, and encourage other partner organisations to do the same.

Gender

We will:

- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about gender.
- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone.
- Where halachic boundaries do not prevent it, and in line with the provisions of schedule nine of the Equality Act, offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay, and encourage other partner organisations to do the same.
- Provide support to prevent discrimination against transgender people i.e., people who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process; social, medical, or otherwise, to live in a different gender

Sexual orientation

We will:

- Ensure that we take account of the needs of everyone, including the LGBTQ+ communities.
- Promote positive images of the LGBTQ+ communities.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the LGBTQ+ communities.
- Take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone.
- Offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay, and encourage other partner organisations to do the same.

Religion or belief

We will:

- Ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible.
- Respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.
- Including non-religious beliefs (e.g., atheism, humanism)
- Philosophical beliefs (e.g., environmental beliefs, ethical veganism)

Pregnancy or maternity

We will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity during pregnancy or maternity leave.
- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about pregnancy or maternity.
- Ensure that no individual is disadvantaged during pregnancy or maternity leave, and that we take account of the needs of our employees' during pregnancy or maternity leave.

Marriage or civil partnership

We will:

- Ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity regardless of marriage or civil partnership status.

- Challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees.
- Ensure that no individual is disadvantaged because of their marriage or civil partnership status.

Part time and fixed term work

We will:

- Ensure that part time and fixed term staff are treated the same as comparable full time or permanent staff, and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

Equal pay

We will:

- Ensure that all employees have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work, or work of equal value.

Recruitment

We will:

- Make sure that our recruitment procedure ensures that we treat all applicants/candidates with dignity and respect.
- Ensure that no candidate is treated less favourably than others throughout the process.

Policy Breach

Any breach of this policy by employees will be addressed under our Disciplinary Procedure; if the breach involves a volunteer or Honorary Officer, the matter will be investigated by or on behalf of the Trustees. Serious breaches of this policy could constitute gross misconduct, leading to dismissal without notice. If you believe you have experienced discrimination, you may raise your concerns through our Grievance Procedure.

Data Protection

Information will be processed in line with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

Monitoring will be conducted and information will be retained securely and only for as long as necessary, in line with the Charity's [retention schedule](#).

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, to ensure its continued compliance with prevailing legislation and best practice.