



Northampton u3a Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Mission Statement

The u3a values its members as individuals and encourages all members to recognise their unique and different perspectives, abilities and contributions, and it sees diversity and inclusion as routes to growth and enrichment.

The National Diversity and Inclusion Committee aims to support and advise u3as to ensure that all their members and prospective members can access the informal learning and the many other activities in their u3as, encouraging inclusion and diversity in everything we do.

Legal Requirement

This Policy is a legal requirement of the Equality Act 2010 and the Charity Commission in England and Wales will enquire as to the existence of this policy within the annual return questionnaire.

Background

Northampton u3a is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members of each u3a draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to learn from each other. We recognise that some people are particularly vulnerable to discrimination so we are committed to making our u3a as inclusive and welcoming as possible.

The 2010 Act stipulates that the organisation cannot treat someone unfairly on the basis of what it calls 'protected characteristics', which are:

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

Measures we can take:

Northampton u3a will strive to ensure that members do not experience discrimination on the basis of their protected characteristics. This will include providing equal access to groups and behaviours between members and by Committee Members and group leaders. The Equality Act highlights that an organisation should consider what **'reasonable adjustments'** can be made in order to accommodate those who may have particular needs. Our committee will review the reasonable adjustments needed for all members with particular needs on an ongoing basis. Where necessary, we will seek guidance and additional support National Office.

Northampton u3a will make sure all new members are aware of our policies and procedures in relation to equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility as well as the Member Code of Conduct. We will make reasonable adjustments and take practical steps where possible to allow a wide range of people to participate in our activities and meetings. This may include:

- Providing written advice sheet to help Speakers make reasonable adjustments to their presentation.
- 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
- Publicity:
 - Using a variety of methods and platforms to communicate externally and raise the profile of the U3A.
 - Make communications available to those who don't have access to the internet
 - Use a range of images that reflect the local community
- Recruiting new members:
 - Doing outreach sessions and contacting agencies working with community groups who may be harder to reach
 - Encouraging members who are underrepresented within the u3a to assist with the recruitment process
 - Managing growth so that we ensure that new members can be accommodated
- Monitoring:
 - We will monitor the number of members who join, re-join and leave each year in order to identify any trends in membership.
 - The Committee will review the diversity of the membership on an ongoing basis and will seek to ensure that the U3A remains attractive and accessible to all.

- Tasks and Roles:
 - We want a greater range of people to have their voices heard by encouraging members to become Group Leaders, Ambassadors, Associate members of the Committee or to join working parties.
 - We will endeavour to appoint a Diversity Champion whose role will be to ensure access to general and group meetings for all members, recommending reasonable adjustments as needed.
 - Group Leaders will be made aware of issues in relation to accessibility and what steps they may need to take in meeting access requirements
 - Members will be encouraged to attend u3a courses which offer induction and training around equality, diversity and inclusion. Group Leaders will also have the opportunity to become more aware of the issues at in-house training days.

Code of Conduct

This states that members should abide by u3a policies and procedures as well as treating each other with dignity and respect. Behaviours deemed discriminatory or offensive are not acceptable.

Should Northampton u3a Committee become aware of any discriminatory practice or harassment, we will seek to address this through consultation with all parties concerned and, where necessary, through invoking formal procedures.

If any member of Northampton u3a feels they have experienced or witnessed discriminatory behaviour or harassment, it 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 U3As constitution and formal procedures, as to what steps will be taken to address the issue.

In these circumstances, Northampton u3a Committee will take advice from National Office.



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 member's 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.

This policy was adopted on: 4th October 2022

Signed: 

Review date: 4th October 2023