

Stoke-on-Trent South u3a - Equality, Diversity, Inclusion - Policy and Procedure.

Statement

Stoke-on-Trent South u3a is a membership charity which enables members to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members of the branch draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from each other (peer to peer learning). Stoke-on-Trent South u3a recognises that some people are particularly likely to experience discrimination and harassment and is committed to making sure that the branch 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

Stoke-on-Trent South 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 branch 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. Stoke-on-Trent 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 from the u3a Trust.

Practical approaches to inclusion

The Committee will ensure that this Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy, together with the branch Member Code of Conduct are placed onto the Branch Website. When required, references will be made to these documents via the monthly Newsletter and the Website Noticeboard. The Committee will take reasonable measures and practical approaches to ensure a wide range of people take part in our activities and meetings.

These may include:

1. Consideration given to the time of day of meetings and their location.
2. Consideration of venues for meetings including:
 - Accessible to wheelchair users.
 - Access to PA system.
 - Disabled toilet facilities available.
3. Publicity:
 - Using a variety of methods and platforms to communicate externally and raise the profile of the u3a.
 - Monthly Newsletter made easy to read, and made accessible to members who don't have access to the internet.
 - Doing outreach sessions and contacting agencies working with community groups who may be harder to reach
4. Monitoring:
 - The branch committee will consider the diversity of the membership on an ongoing basis, and will seek to ensure that the u3a remains attractive and accessible to all.

Member Code of Conduct

Stoke-on-Trent South u3a has a Member Code of Conduct. The code of conduct outlines that members should abide by the u3a's policies and procedures as well as treating each other with dignity and respect. This would include not acting in a way that would be deemed discriminatory or offensive.

Dealing with discrimination and harassment

If any member of Stoke-on-Trent South 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 branch Complaints/Grievance Procedure.

This organisation will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against, and will not victimise or treat them less well because they have raised concerns.

Review of Policy.

This Policy and Procedure was reviewed and agreed at the committee meeting of Stoke-on-Trent South u3a held on 8th February 2024. It will be reviewed at least every 3 years.