

Furness u3a Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Furness u3a aims to meet its commitments to Diversity and Inclusion in both the letter and the spirit of the law. The letter of the law is the Equality Act 2010 which states that it is against the law to discriminate based on:

Age	Religion or belief
Race	Sexual orientation
Sex	Marriage or civil partnership
Gender reassignment	Pregnancy and maternity
Disability	

Discrimination inhibiting diversity can take a number of forms:

Direct discrimination	This is when you're treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic; for example, if your local gym refuses to give you a membership because of any of the above
Indirect discrimination	This is when goods or services have criteria which have the effect of being discriminatory against a person because of a protected characteristic like their age. For example, if you can pay for an item in instalments but only if you are working, this would disadvantage retired people.
Harassment	This is when you experience behaviour that makes you feel intimidated, humiliated, or degraded, or that creates a hostile environment. For example, if another u3a member repeatedly makes offensive jokes about your age. This also applies to comments or jokes made about someone you associate with, such as a partner.
Victimisation	This is when you are treated unfairly as a result of making a complaint about discrimination or giving evidence when someone else makes a complaint.

All the above may be made complicated and indigestible by attempts to spell out in ever increasing detail the many interpretations and nuances of the legislation. This is where the spirit of the law should be considered. Our u3a community tends by its nature to be made up of sensible, pragmatic and considerate individuals who respect each other in our many different persona so occurrences of discrimination inhibiting diversity should be few and far between. Being guided by the spirit of the law means that we will promote diversity, and avoid discrimination, in relation to any irrelevant characteristic, such as personal appearance, even if we are not required to do so by the letter of the law.

However from time to time by accident or design situations may arise where a member believes that discrimination inhibiting diversity has, is or may in the future be occurring. We should all respond to such events in an appropriate and positive way - which may be different depending on the exact circumstances.

Confrontation should always be avoided if possible, oil can be poured on troubled waters in many different ways depending on circumstances and individuals concerned and this is invariably the best approach. Common sense, respect and consideration should guide our actions at all times.

It is important that all and any manifestations of Discrimination are reported to a member of the Furness u3a Committee, she/he will record relevant details and report the matter to the Committee, which will determine an appropriate response.