

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy



Policy Owner	Chief Executive
Policy Lead	Deputy Chief Executive
Approved by	Board of Trustees
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Version	5

Version Control	Comments
1.2	Updated to include good practice from KNH Policy

Demonstrating Organisational Values:

Which values are demonstrated in this paper?	
To be client centred	X
Deliver services with compassion	X
Value staff and volunteers	X
Be inclusive and embrace equality and diversity	X
Develop trust in our services	X
Everybody working together to achieve the same objectives	X

Introduction

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees promotes the wellbeing of all older people and works to make later life a fulfilling and enjoyable experience. It recognises that every person is an individual with different needs, preferences and abilities. It aims to reflect this diversity in everything it does, including making its services inclusive and accessible to older people from all sections of the community and attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees believes that harnessing different life experiences, attributes and contributions from staff, volunteers and service users will make Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees a more effective and inclusive organisation and a better place to work.

This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with us, including pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities. It also covers the treatment and conduct of volunteers.

The Policy Statement

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees values diversity. By respecting and embracing diversity it can maximise its impact through meeting individual needs and staying in touch with the changing societies in which it works.

Staff and volunteers recognise and fulfil their personal role in making Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees a genuinely inviting and inclusive organisation. Equality means being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunities.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals working for, and with, Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of everyone to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees.

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees has a commitment to diversity, which is about:

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff, volunteers and clients are recognised and valued
- Recognising and seeking to redress inequality and disadvantage
- Treating all in a fair, open and honest manner
- Recognising the right of volunteers, employees and service users to be treated with dignity and respect
- Encouraging all staff and volunteers to come forward with any issues they need assistance and understanding with, no matter their background, identity or circumstances.

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees is committed to:

- Equality of opportunity
- Tackling discrimination and disadvantage
- Tackling harassment and intimidation
- Making its workforce and the organisation, as a whole, more representative of the diverse communities in Calderdale & Kirklees
- Making sure our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our service users and clients by assessing and meeting the diverse needs of our clients
- Monitoring and reviewing this policy regularly
- Having clear procedures that enable our clients, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated
- Treating breaches of our equality and diversity policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees will not tolerate less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, gender, gender reassignment, age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, marital/civil partnership status, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, responsibility for dependents, trade union or political activities, criminal record, place of residence, religion, faith or other beliefs, health status or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees will never use cultural practices as a justification for/or to ignore an issue of safeguarding.

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees believes that discrimination is wrong and should be actively opposed. Discrimination denies human dignity, a freedom for people to be themselves, and a place in a free society.

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees is primarily committed to the welfare of older people and to maintaining their individual dignity and their value to society. Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees is also committed to a policy of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in service delivery and in employment practices and will not accept discrimination in its work or provision of services.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees and volunteers about their rights and responsibilities under this policy. Responsibilities include staff and volunteers conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff and volunteers should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, volunteers, customers, suppliers and the public.

Provision of Services

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees aims to deliver services throughout Calderdale & Kirklees to older people who need them, without discriminating against, stigmatising or patronising older people. Every service user will be treated in a professional manner, with courtesy and respect.

Users of our services and those who take part in our activities will be informed that Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees is committed to this policy so that:

- They will know a policy exists and a copy is available, so as to guide all members of the organisation and others to share the commitment and code of practice of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- All who come into contact with Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees will know the standards that we are trying to achieve and have the opportunity to assist us in trying to achieve them.
- They will know they have the right to complain, if they feel these standards are not being adhered to or are dissatisfied with the service provided to them.

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees will make sure that its services meet the needs of its diverse communities by involving communities in identifying their needs and by seeking to meet these needs.

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees will develop services to make sure there is maximum take up by all communities and particularly those groups facing disadvantage and discrimination. It will do this by:

- Providing information in plain English and using methods other than written documents to present information as appropriate.
- Offering information on request in accessible formats, including spoken community languages, large print, audio tape/CD, on DVD in British Sign Language and on the internet as appropriate.
- Accessing interpretation, translation and sign language services on request as appropriate.

Discrimination

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees will not tolerate discrimination or harassment towards employees (current and former), job applicants, volunteers, clients, service users, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with clients suppliers or other work-related contacts), and on work-related trips or events, including social events.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

(a) **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. The nine protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

(b) **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice (PCP) that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular protected characteristic more than others and cannot be justified.

- full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men.
- Giving employees of a certain sexual orientation lowering rankings and worse reviews than others, for no reason other than their orientation.
- Showing any other type of preferential treatment, such as giving more desirable jobs or positions to those of a specific orientation.
- Discriminating in any way based on an assumed orientation, whether that is true or not. For instance, it is illegal to pass over someone for a promotion on the grounds that he or she is thought to be of a homosexual orientation, even if the reality is that the worker is of a heterosexual orientation.

(c) **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.

(d) **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

(e) **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

Recruitment and selection

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees will ensure that recruitment practices fulfil the requirement of this policy. Vacancies should generally be advertised to a wide and diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. All posts will have a job description and person specification, which will contain essential and desirable skills, qualifications and experience. Person specifications will only contain details which are required. All recruitment adverts will carry the statement "Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees promotes Diversity and Inclusion. A copy of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is available on request".

Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a protected characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

Short-listing should be done by more than one person, wherever possible. The format for interview will be agreed before it takes place and will remain constant for all interviews for the position. Every effort will be made to make provision for staff and volunteers with a disability by making reasonable adaptations.

Posts which are deemed suitable, will be advertised as available for job share. Job shares may also be available to staff in suitable posts on request and providing that a suitable job sharer may be recruited.

All staff and trustees involved in recruitment and selection will be aware of this policy and adhere to it at all times. All applicants for posts will be treated strictly on merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. As an exception, posts targeted at specific groups of people will be exempted, as allowed by legislation.

All application forms will include an optional and detachable section for equality and diversity monitoring, which will not be used as part of the selection process. The information will be individually confidential and used for assessing recruitment and advertising practices periodically.

An appointed person will be responsible for vetting, in confidence, applicants for sensitive posts; this may include Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. Reasons for the decision to appoint, or not, will be noted and kept for at least six months.

Part-time and fixed-term work

Part-time and fixed-term employees should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

Disabilities

If an employee is disabled or becomes disabled, they are encouraged to talk about their condition so that reasonable adjustments or support may be considered as appropriate. As we are a member of the Disability Confident Scheme we have pledged to offer an interview to any candidate with a disability that meets the essential criteria of the role. We also offer placements through our local job centre, to individuals with a disability seeking to get back to work.

Training and Development

The Board of Trustees, staff and volunteers need to recognise and fulfil their personal role in making Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees a genuinely inviting and inclusive organisation. Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees will ensure that all staff and volunteers know about the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and their responsibilities within it, by including it within Corporate Induction Training, and ensuring it has a high profile within our internal communications and practices.

Additional role specific training will be undertaken to ensure understanding of and commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies and procedures, as appropriate.

Recording and Monitoring of Service Provision

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees will monitor and review the take up of the services. Records will be kept of actions and decisions by trustees, staff and volunteers. Monitoring will be carried out on the basis of ethnic background, gender, age, place of residence, sexual orientation and disability. Provision of individual monitoring data will be supplied on a voluntary basis, using agreed categories.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has the ultimate responsibility to provide, implement and review the policy. It is the responsibility of trustees, staff and volunteers to support the policy by ensuring that Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees activities promote diversity and inclusion. The Chief Executive and their Deputy hold the day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that the policy is implemented and, in the first instance, for dealing with or taking action on disciplinary offences. The Board of Trustees will receive a report analysing monitoring data on an annual basis, in order to retain oversight of the impact and implementation of the policy.

Breaches of this policy

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees takes seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination made by fellow employees, volunteers, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal without notice.

If an employee believes that they have suffered discrimination the matter can be raised through Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees Grievance Procedure or Bullying and Harassment Policy. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

Employees must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.