



Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Policy

Age UK Croydon is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our workforce and eliminating unlawful discrimination. The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

2. The policy's purpose is to:

- Provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time, as well as to volunteers, including members of the Board of Trustees
- Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief or sex
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in 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

3. The organisation commits to:

- Encourage equality and diversity in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued
- This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination
- All staff 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, customers, suppliers and the public
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities
- Acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and any appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice
- Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 — which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic — is a criminal offence

- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation
- Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act)
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief or sex. In encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality policy
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality and diversity policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues
- Age UK Croydon is committed to promoting equality for everyone and reflecting the full diversity of the community in all its services.

4. Age UK Croydon is committed to:

- Expressing its concerns about the discrimination experienced both in seeking employment and when in employment by people on the grounds of their age. Age UK Croydon is also concerned about any age-related discrimination when seeking to access or when using Age UK Croydon's services.
- Opposing the socially diverse and harmful effects of racism, which subjects black and minority ethnic people to negative attitudes and treatment resulting in racial discrimination, hatred and harassment
- Openly stating its concerns about the discrimination faced by women. Age UK Croydon recognises that women constitute the majority of Age UK Croydon's workforce and a large proportion of the service users
- Challenging the common assumption that disability equals inability. Age UK Croydon considers that the major obstacles faced by disabled people are the loss or limitation of opportunities that prevents disabled people taking part in the mainstream life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers
- Acting upon its concern about the discrimination faced by the LGBTQIA2s+ community. The discrimination can range from stereotyping through institutional discrimination to homophobic violence. The effect of such discrimination is to deny equality of opportunity to the LGBTQIA2s+ community.

5. Age UK Croydon Supporting Statements of Equality & Diversity

AGE UK CROYDON is an equal opportunities employer and any discrimination or harassment on the grounds of colour, sex, race, nationality, religion or beliefs, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, marital status, domestic circumstances, pregnancy and maternity, trade union membership/non-membership or age will not be tolerated.

Age UK Croydon is committed to the Accessible Information Standard, where applicable. This ensures clients who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss are given information in a format they can easily read or understand.

The Equality and Diversity policy is fully supported by senior management.

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found at: Age UK Croydon SharePoint > All Team > Staff > Policies & Procedures > Policies. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance — usually their line manager.

Use of the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

6. Procedure

Putting equality into practice

- The Board of Trustees aims to ensure that the policy is implemented and will apply the policy in relation to all of its decisions.
- The policy and procedures will be discussed with personnel and where possible with clients to enable them to fully understand and contribute to the development of the policy.
- All personnel will be provided with a copy of the policy, and asked to read and sign this. The policy will be made available to all clients, potential employees and volunteers, other agents, contractors and suppliers.
- Training will be provided for all personnel to ensure that they fully understand the policy and its implications, and this will be incorporated into induction training.
- The Board of Trustees and all other personnel will be required to confront discrimination in the most appropriate way using the guidance provided.
- The policy will be incorporated into all aspects of AGE UK CROYDON'S business strategy.

AGE UK CROYDON will challenge and discipline anyone not following the policy.

The policy will be reviewed regularly together with progress in delivering the action plan for its implementation.

The principles set out in the policy will be used to ensure that any changes in AGE UK CROYDON are implemented fairly. This will include rearrangement of the workplace and promotion.

The policy will be publicised and promoted.

7. Implementing training

- Training may be provided as part of an induction process and if appropriate by asking personnel to attend specific courses or asking them to complete an online training package.
- Training will explain what the Equality policy is, why it has been introduced and how it will be put into practice.
- Training should cover the law of all protected characteristics and what behaviour is and is not acceptable.
- Training should include the risk of ignoring or seeming to approve inappropriate behaviour, and personal liability for this.
- As discrimination can affect the way an employer functions, training should include the impact that generalisations, stereotypes, bias, and inappropriate language in day-to-day operations can have on people's chances of obtaining work, promotion, recognition, services, and respect.
- Training should include information on the monitoring processes and why these are undertaken.

8. Confronting discrimination

Discrimination against individuals is not to be tolerated by AGE UK CROYDON trustees, employees or volunteers who are expected to confront discrimination of all types. This includes confronting an individual when it is safe to do so, whistle blowing, reporting individuals and organisations when necessary and educating others. 'Confronting' is seen as an educational and campaigning process.

If individual action is not appropriate, a discriminatory situation should always be noted and reported to line managers, the Chief Executive or a member of the Board of Trustees. A report may then be made to another organisation such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the police or social services. The Chief Executive may decide to work with other organisations locally or nationally to counter discrimination.

It may be necessary for AGE UK CROYDON to support an individual to taking a case through the court processes to eliminate the discrimination.

AGE UK CROYDON has a role to educate others in recognising, understanding and eliminating discriminatory practices. Demystifying 'difference' helps to reduce discrimination in all its forms.

9. Challenging discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 can be used to challenge discrimination in a variety of situations including the process of job application, as an employee or as a recipient of services including education services.

AGE UK CROYDON may be challenged by a disabled person if discrimination is evident in its dealing with potential or actual employees or in providing services. 'Challenging' is usually a legal process.

AGE UK CROYDON should not ask questions about health or disability as part of the job selection process. However once the job has been offered, a medical questionnaire can be used, and questions about health asked, AGE UK CROYDON should be aware that there is a possibility of challenge on the grounds of discrimination should a job offer be withdrawn. AGE UK CROYDON is allowed to ask questions of applicants where reasonable adjustment is an issue, such as whether the applicant is able to undertake a key task, and what adjustment may be required to enable him/her/their, to do so.

AGE UK CROYDON must provide all services on the same terms and to the same standards for all users of its services. Where required, AGE UK CROYDON should make reasonable adjustments to enable a person with any particular disability to access services. AGE UK CROYDON can be challenged and prosecuted if it has failed to make a service available, or has failed to make reasonable adjustment in order to make a service available.

AGE UK CROYDON recognises how public literature should reflect diversity of the local population and enable access for non English speakers.

10. Monitoring equality

The Board of Trustees will include in its annual business cycle arrangements to monitor and review compliance with the Equality policy in terms of the recruitment, treatment and training of staff, volunteers, and members of the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees will include in its annual business cycle arrangement to monitor the equality of access to AGE UK CROYDON services and will ensure that arrangements are in place to monitor the profile of its clients. Monitoring data can be used in a variety of ways.

- Compare with regional representative data to see how far the workforce represents the local community.
- Compare with previous year's data and look for patterns and trends to see if there is a cause for concern and determine what to do about it.
- Gathering and storing information.

Applicants, personnel and clients must be told why they are being asked for monitoring information.

People may be concerned about responding fully and honestly; they may be concerned that the information will be used to discriminate against them, or they may have had a previous bad experience where the information was used in the wrong way. This is especially true for

job applicants and for particular characteristics, such as disabled people with a mental health condition.

Personnel and applicants can be sent a copy of the procedure as reassurance. Privacy and confidentiality — individual data needs to be shared on a 'need to know' basis, and should be protected and stored in line with the Data Protection Act.

In particular if someone is transgender (someone with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment) who has a Gender Recognition Certificate, it may be a criminal offence to disclose this without permission.

As a small organisation should ensure that staff cannot be individually identified when sharing or publishing information.

Consult personnel about what equality data should be published so that they do not worry about personal information becoming public. If necessary, restrict published information to sex, gender reassignment, ethnic origin, age and visible disability having confirmed that personnel are happy with this.

Equality monitoring data should be organised so that it can be used in the future in a variety of ways.

Check whether people with a protected characteristic are more or less likely to apply for a job, be shortlisted and be successful at interview.

Review whether a disabled person who has been appointed to a job is asked whether they need any adjustments when doing the job, so that it can be seen whether these are reasonable.

Check whether people with a particular protected characteristic are more likely to leave AGE UK CROYDON after a short time.

11. Accessible Information Standard procedures

Staff and volunteers will identify the communication and information needs of those who use Age UK Croydon's service, by asking clients if they have communication and information needs. (Record the communication and information needs identified. See Appendix 1)

- Age UK Croydon's database will flag the communication and information needs of the client
- Share the identifiable information and communication needs of the individual when
- appropriate
- Make best effort to meet the communication and information needs identified

Further guidance can be found:

<http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/2/e/Preventdiscrimination-support-equality.pdf>

Approved by Board of Trustees:	16.05.2023
Next Review:	May 2024 Reviewed April 2025
Next Review	April 2026
Name or position of person responsible for this policy:	Signature:  Name: Rosaleen Liard Position: Director HR & Governance
Other related policies:	Data Protection Recruitment and Selection Volunteering
Relevant Legislation: Equality Act 2010 Gender Recognition Act 2004 Human Rights Act 1998 Protection from Harassment Act 1997 Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 Sex Discrimination Act 1986	Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 Data Protection Act 1998 Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Equal Pay Act 1970; Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations 1983
Useful information: www.equalities.gov.uk www.direct.gov.uk www.mind.org.uk	www.equalityhumanrights.com www.acas.org.uk

AGE UK CROYDON is a registered charity no. 1081013 and a registered company no. 3921436. AGE UK CROYDON TRADING LIMITED, registered company no. 5792724 is a wholly owned subsidiary of AGE UK CROYDON. All Policies and Procedures apply to both companies.

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Appendix 1

To whom it may concern,

In accordance with The Accessible Information Standard (SCCI 1605 (Accessible Information)) please accept the below as formal notification of my information and communication preferences.

I communicate using (e.g. BSL, deafblind manual):

To help me communicate I use (e.g. a talking mat, hearing aids):

I need information in (e.g. braille, easy read):

If you need to contact me the best way is (e.g. email, telephone):

Name:

Address:

Telephone number:

Providers of health and adult social care services have new duties to support those who access their services who have information or communication needs because of a disability or sensory impairment. They must:

1. Identify the communication and information needs of those who use their service;
2. Record the communication and information needs they have identified;
3. Have a consistent flagging system so that if a member of staff opens the individual's record it is immediately brought to their attention if the person has a communication or information need;
4. Share the identified information and communication needs of the individual when appropriate;
5. Meet the communication and information needs identified.