



## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

### Statement

Wollaton u3a is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members in their third age to share educational, creative and leisure activities. It is non-religious and non-political organisation.

Members of each u3a draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from each other. Wollaton u3a recognises that some people are particularly likely to experience discrimination and harassment and are committed to making sure that the u3a is as inclusive and welcoming as possible.

### Aims of this policy

This policy has been drawn up to comply with the Equality Act 2010, and incorporates updates following the 2023 amendment effective from 1st January 2024. The Act stipulates that organisations cannot treat someone unfairly based on 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

Wollaton u3a will strive to ensure that members do not experience discrimination based on their protected characteristics, or for any other reason. This will include ensuring where possible equal access to groups and fair behaviour between members and by Wollaton u3a Committee Members and Interest Group Convenors. The Equality Act highlights that organisations need to consider what **'reasonable adjustments'** can be made to accommodate those who may have particular needs. Wollaton 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 and additional support from the u3aPlus sub-committee and/or National Office.

## Practical approaches to inclusion

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

- Consideration given to the time of day of meetings and their location.
- Consider needs of those vulnerable members e.g. need for their companion/carer or support in accessing suitable transport. Note: Even if other members are willing to help, they cannot be allowed to take responsibility for another members care, as this would be deemed to be outside the insurance cover if any injury or damage resulted. The members own carer/companion would be covered by the Third Age Trust liability insurance.
- Consideration of venues for meetings including:
  - Accessible to wheelchair users
  - Access to PA system and a hearing loop (not currently available)
  - Guidance to speakers on positioning, use of microphone etc to maximise engagement.
  - 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:
  - Consider, when possible, contacting agencies working with community groups who may be harder to reach.
  - Encouraging members who are representative of the groups 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:
  - Wollaton u3a will monitor member numbers i.e. the numbers of members who join, re-join and leave each year to identify any trends in membership.
  - Wollaton u3a 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:
  - Ensure a range of people get their voices heard by encouraging more members to take on roles such as leading groups.

- The u3a will appoint a Welfare Officer whose role it will be to ensure that both new and existing members can access the members meetings and groups that they would like to join and consider what reasonable adjustments may be needed to ensure this.
- The Interest Groups Coordinator will ensure that new Interest Group Convenors are made aware of issues in relation to accessibility and what steps they may need to take in meeting access requirements. Each group will be reviewed on an individual basis as certain groups may require a certain level of fitness or mobility and members need to be made aware of this in advance.
- Wollaton u3a will offer induction and awareness around equality, diversity and inclusion to Committee Members and Interest Group Convenors on an ongoing basis.
- Accessibility needs faced by a member wishing to go on a day trip should be referred to the organiser, who will work with the member to try to meet the needs.
- Wollaton u3a will strive to ensure that its digital communications and platforms are accessible to all members, including those using assistive technologies.

## **Code of Conduct**

Wollaton 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 includes not acting in a way that would be deemed discriminatory or offensive.

## **Dealing with discrimination and harassment**

Where Wollaton u3a Committee becomes aware of any discriminatory practice or harassment, the committee will seek to address this through consultation with all parties concerned and, where necessary, through invoking formal procedures. If any member of Wollaton 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 u3as constitution and formal policies and procedures, as to what steps will be taken to address the issue.

## 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.

**Vulnerability** refers to the increased risk some individuals or groups may face of exclusion, disadvantage, or discrimination due to personal or social factors such as age, disability, health, or background. Recognising vulnerability helps ensure all members are treated with fairness, respect, and understanding.

**Promoting diversity** is about recognising that everyone is different and creating an environment that values members and ensures 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.

**Intersectionality** recognises that individuals may face multiple, overlapping forms of disadvantage (e.g. age and disability) and aims to address these combined effects in promoting true inclusion.

This policy was adopted on: 21/08/2025

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