



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Statement

This document has been created from a u3a National Office template. The Charity Commission in England and Wales enquires as to the existence of this policy within the annual return questionnaire.

Wilmslow U3A is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members in their third age to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members of each u3a draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from each other (peer to peer learning). Wilmslow U3A recognise 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. 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

Wilmslow 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 Wilmslow U3A 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. Wilmslow U3A Committee will review the reasonable adjustments needed for all members and individual members with particular needs on an ongoing basis.

Practical approaches to inclusion

Wilmslow U3A will make sure all new members are aware of its policies and procedures in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and accessibility as well as the Member Code of Conduct (see below). Wilmslow 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.
- Consideration of venues for meetings including:
 - Accessible to wheelchair users
 - Access to PA system and a hearing loop
 - 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:
 - Doing outreach sessions and 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 i.e. men or younger members to assist with the recruitment process
 - Managing growth so that we ensure that new members can be accommodated
- Monitoring:
 - Wilmslow U3A will monitor member numbers i.e. the numbers of members who join, re-join and leave each year in order to identify any trends in membership.
 - Wilmslow 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.
 - Wilmslow U3A will seek 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 achieve this.

- The Groups Coordinator will ensure that new Group Leaders 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.

Code of Conduct

Mutual respect, supporting and learning from each other and effective communication are key elements to our work.

u3a Members have the right to not be bullied or abused either verbally or physically.

We expect all u3a members to:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect regardless of their age, gender, ability, race, cultural background, sexual orientation or religious belief.
- Maintain a respectful attitude towards the opinions of others.
- Act as a good role model with appropriate behaviour.
- Act in the best interest of Wilmslow U3A and not do anything which may bring Wilmslow U3A or the wider u3a movement into disrepute or expose it to undue risk.
- Uphold the Principles of the u3a movement.
- Promote diversity, equality, and inclusion in everything we do.
- Abide by Third Age Trust policies and procedures.
- Use the Trust's resources responsibly and only to further its stated charitable objects/ purposes.
- Reflect the current organisational policy of The Third Age Trust, regardless of whether it conflicts with personal views.
- Ensure organisational and individual confidentiality at all times.

Wilmslow U3A expects everyone to contribute in a positive way and ask that everyone keep this Code of Conduct in mind to make Wilmslow U3A a positive organisation to be a part of.

Wilmslow U3A operates a zero-tolerance policy towards violence, harassment, bullying and sexual, religious or racial discrimination. If this is identified, Wilmslow U3A will take appropriate action to protect the relevant parties.

All those who are part of the u3a movement have a duty to report any safeguarding concerns.

Dealing with discrimination and harassment

Where Wilmslow U3A Committee become 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 Wilmslow 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 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.

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

Changes to the policy

This Policy is available on the Wilmslow U3A website. This policy may change from time to time. Members will be informed via the Newsletter and the monthly meetings when any material changes are made to Wilmslow U3A's policies and procedures.

Queries regarding this policy

If you have any questions regarding this Policy, please direct your queries to secretary@wilmslowu3a.org.uk

Adoption and Review

This policy was adopted on 9th March 2026 and should be reviewed when there is a change to the national u3a guidance.