**Model Equality and Diversity Policy**

The following model policy can be used in the workplace to promote a working environment that values equality and diversity and is free from discrimination. UNISON’s full introductory guidance to equality and diversity in the workplace can be found [here](https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2020/03/Bargaining-for-equality-and-diversity-guide-and-model-policy.pdf)

**Statement of commitment**

The parties to this agreement wholeheartedly support the principle of equality and diversity in employment. We are committed to creating a culture that respects and values each other’s differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential and that combats prejudice, discrimination and harassment. Our aim is that the workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society.

We recognise that many people in our society experience discrimination. Discrimination is acting unfairly against a group or individual through, for example, exclusion, verbal comment, stigmatising, harassment, victimisation, a failure to appreciate needs or the assumption of such needs without consultation.

Discrimination can be direct or indirect (where there is a condition, rule, policy or practice that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic and cannot be justified).

All forms of discrimination are unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

Our aim is to ensure that no worker, either current or potential, is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, family situation, caring responsibilities, socio-economic background, trade union activity or employment status, whether part-time, full-time, fixed-term or temporary (this is not an exhaustive list).

.............. (the employer) is committed to a programme of action to make this Equality and Diversity Policy effective and will work with the trade unions to take positive action to redress past and present discrimination, both individual and institutional.

Selection for employment or promotion or any other benefit will be on the basis of merit and ability only. Selection for training will be on the basis of job requirement only.

Intimidation, harassment and bullying will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action.

.............. (the employer) will take seriously and investigate any complaints of discrimination or harassment, using the agreed procedures and respecting confidentiality.

Details of how harassment and bullying will be tackled are covered in a separate policy *[state name of policy and where it is found, for example ‘the Dignity at Work policy, found within the staff handbook’].*

All workers will be made aware of .............. (the employer’s) Equality and Diversity policy and will be expected to comply with it. They have a duty to co-operate with .............. (the employer) to ensure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and in preventing discrimination.

Managers and supervisors have a responsibility to raise awareness of the issue, respond positively to any complaints and challenge and stop unacceptable behaviour in the workplace.

This policy applies to all workers on and off the premises, including those working away from their main office or normal place of work.

This policy is supported by and developed with the trade unions representing the employees.

It will be communicated to workers using a variety of methods including training, information and publicity, team briefings, departmental meetings and in-house publications and *[if a public sector employer]* within information published annually to show compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

**Responsibilities**

Every member of staff is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Breaches of the Equality and Diversity Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action against employees and termination of contracts for services of contractors or agency staff.

Workers who feel they have been discriminated against should raise the matter with their line manager. Initially the worker and manager should aim to resolve the matter informally. It may be that discriminatory action is unwitting and easily resolved once the problem is clear.

If the worker is dissatisfied with the outcome, the complaint is very serious, or their line manager is the cause of the complaint, the worker should raise the matter, in writing, as a formal grievance under .............. (the employer’s) Grievance Procedure. Employees may also use .............. (the employer’s) Bullying and Harassment *[or Dignity at Work]* Policy if appropriate.

**Action Plan**

.............. (the employer’s) action plan provides details of how it will deliver this policy and challenge discrimination in other policies. It will also provide details of monitoring and reviewing procedures, equality training, and activities to improve equality and diversity goals in the workplace.

The plan will

* set out dates and timescales
* provide details of what activities will be undertaken to improve equality and diversity in the workplace
* who will undertake them
* set out measures of success
* and include targets for action points as appropriate.

**Trade Union involvement**

Consultation will take place with the recognised trade union on the implementation, development, monitoring and review of this policy and action plan. Union reps will be given training equal to that of managers and supervisors and sufficient time to carry out their duties.

**Review and monitoring**

This policy and action plan will be reviewed jointly by unions and management, on a regular basis. The initial review of effectiveness will take place six months after this policy comes into effect. Thereafter, reviews will be carried out at intervals of not more than 12 months. Monitoring and review will be carried out in strictest confidence and may include questionnaires, surveys, consultation and feedback.

The purpose of this monitoring is to identify possible patterns of inequality, investigate their underlying causes and remove any unfairness of disadvantage.

.............. (the employer) recognises people’s right to be open about their sexual orientation/transgender identity and their right to keep this confidential. We recognise that this has implications for record keeping, for how some rights can be accessed and for how complaints of discrimination are reported and investigated.

**Information and Training**

.............. (the employer) will ensure that all new workers, supervisors and managers will receive induction on the policy and action plan. Contractors and agency staff will be fully informed about the policy and it will form part of any contract specification. It will also be bought to the attention of visitors, clients etc.

Appropriate training and guidance will be provided to develop equality and diversity. Adequate resources will be made available to fulfil the aims of this policy. The policy will be widely promoted, and copies will be freely available and displayed in .............. (the employer’s) offices.