

1. Statement

Formby 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). Formby U3A aims to be as inclusive and welcoming as possible.

2. Aims of this policy

This policy has been drawn up to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and give guidance on good practice on Diversity and Inclusion.

3. 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
- political belief

Formby 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 Formby U3A Committee Members and Group Leaders. The Equality Act also highlights the fact that organisations need to consider what '**reasonable adjustments**' can be made in order to accommodate members with disabilities. Formby U3A Committee will review the reasonable adjustments needed for such members. Where necessary, the Committee will seek guidance and additional support from U3APlus and/or National Office. Accessibility for disabled members is discussed in detail in Formby U3A's Accessibility Policy.

4. Practical approaches to inclusion

Formby U3A will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments and take practical steps to ensure most people can participate in our activities and meetings. This may include:

- Consideration given to the time of day of meetings and their location.
- Publicity and recruitment:

- 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
- 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 under represented within the U3A i.e. men or younger members to assist with the recruitment process

5. Code of Conduct

Formby U3A has terms and conditions of membership which is in effect a member code of conduct. The terms and conditions include a requirement to treat fellow members with dignity and respect. This would include not acting in a way that would be deemed discriminatory or offensive.

6. Dealing with discrimination and harassment

Where Formby 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 Formby 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.

7. Review

Formby U3A will publish this policy on the Formby U3A website and draw it to the attention of Group Leaders.

Formby U3A Committee will review the operation of this policy annually.

8. 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 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.

9. Review date: May 2021