

**The Guild for Lifelong Learning**  
Date: December 2025  
Review date: December 2027  
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Classification: General

**Charity No.** 1151387  
**Company No.** 8331345

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

### **1. Scope**

**1.1** This policy applies to everyone at the Guild, including current and future:

- a) Staff (paid and voluntary)
- b) Students
- c) Participants in social activities
- d) Visitors
- e) Trustees

**1.2** The policy covers equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of the Guild's functions including: teaching and learning, social activities, marketing and publicity, staff employment, and the built environment.

### **2. Aim and Purpose**

**2.1** The Guild is committed to being inclusive and eliminating discrimination. Our aim is for the Guild to be truly representative of the community it serves, and for everyone to feel respected and able to give their best.

**2.2** The purpose of this policy is to create an organisation that positively promotes an inclusive culture which values diversity, where all individuals are treated fairly and with respect.

**2.3** The Guild is committed to promoting the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and people who do not share it.

**2.4** The Guild aims to encourage a culture where the social and cultural diversity of staff, students, and trustees is respected and valued, ensuring that all have the opportunity to participate fully and achieve their potential irrespective of any of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics.

### **3. Policy Statement**

**3.1** Within the Guild, it is acknowledged that equality, diversity, and inclusion are about making sure people are treated fairly and with respect and that they are given appropriate chances to succeed.

**3.2** The Equality Act 2010 designates nine protected characteristics (defined in **Annex A**).

It is unlawful to discriminate because of:

- a) Age
- b) Disability
- c) Gender reassignment
- d) Marriage or civil partnership
- e) Pregnancy and maternity
- f) Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- g) Religion or belief
- h) Sex
- i) Sexual orientation

**3.3** Any discrimination applied to any existing or potential future member of staff, student, or trustee is unacceptable. Examples of where unlawful discrimination may occur include:

- a) Pay and benefits
- b) Terms and conditions of employment
- c) Dealing with grievances and discipline
- d) Dismissal or redundancy
- e) Leave for parents or requests for flexible working
- f) Selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

**4.1 The Board of Trustees** The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the Guild complies with the general and specific duties of all relevant legislation and statutory guidance to ensure:

- a) The elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- b) The advancement of equality of opportunity and fostering of good relations between different groups.
- c) The Strategic Plan includes a commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, including the provision of relevant training.
- d) Staff equality, diversity, and inclusion information is handled sensitively, in accordance with the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission and data protection legislation.
- e) Recruitment and selection of staff is undertaken in accordance with current legislation.

**4.2 The Principal** The Principal is responsible for:

- a) Monitoring the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- b) Providing an annual report to the Board of Trustees to ensure that the Guild's statutory duties as an employer and service provider are implemented.
- c) Developing appropriate monitoring systems to ensure the effective application of the policy.
- d) Facilitating appropriate on-going staff training and development regarding equality, diversity, and inclusion.

**4.3 All Staff** All staff are responsible for:

- a) Promoting a positive culture within the Guild, ensuring behaviour is appropriate and takes account of the feelings of others.
- b) Ensuring activity design embeds equality within its content where appropriate.

- c) Ensuring the experience of attending an activity reflects the commitment to equality.
- d) Understanding and sensitively applying the principles of this policy.
- e) Ensuring that they do not discriminate unfairly in the way a service is provided.
- f) Reporting all incidents where it is considered there may be a potential breach of the policy.
- g) Undertaking all relevant training offered by the charity.

**4.4 Students, Participants, and Visitors** Students, participants, and visitors are responsible for ensuring all members of the charity's community are treated with dignity and respect.

## **5. Operational Implementation**

### **5.1 Recruitment, Guidance, and Support**

- a) Recruitment and selection procedures are designed to ensure decisions are based on criteria relevant to the job and that arbitrary discrimination is eliminated.
- b) The application procedures for staff recruitment, courses, and social activities are open, non-discriminatory, and friendly.
- c) Where additional support is needed for a student or participant to undertake a course or social activity, advice will be sought in consultation with the individual and, wherever possible, additional support put in place.
- d) All students will receive or be signposted to sources of impartial guidance to enable them to study at a level appropriate to their capability.

### **5.2 Teaching, Learning, and Social Activities**

- a) The Guild will seek to provide a range of activities delivered in ways to suit all students and participants.
- b) All activities, their delivery, and resources used will be free from bias, stereotyping, discrimination, and harassment.
- c) The Guild will develop activities which are welcoming, safe, and designed to address the needs of all involved.
- d) Quality assurance procedures relating to staff engagement and feedback will identify good practice and areas for development.

### **5.3 Built Environment**

- a) The Guild will continue to develop a built environment which is welcoming, safe, and designed to address the needs of all who attend.
- b) The Guild will continually improve physical access to its premises and services.
- c) All signs, communication, and instructions will be clear, simple, and free from discrimination.

### **5.4 Marketing and Publicity**

- a) The Guild will continue to research the needs of prospective participants in the wider community and the needs of under-represented groups to ensure appropriate activity provision.
- b) The commitment to equality will be clearly stated in all publications, and publicity material will be provided in appropriate languages and media as required.

## **6. Training and Development**

**6.1** Training is essential to the success of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. It ensures that everyone is aware of their roles and responsibilities.

**6.2** All staff and trustees are expected to participate in training and development activities based on their abilities, their needs, and those of the Guild in relation to current and future roles.

**6.3** A record of training will be kept by the Guild.

## **7. Complaints and Breaches**

**7.1** Discrimination of any nature is unlawful. A report of this will be treated seriously and, should it be proven, will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

**7.2** Any person who feels they have received unfair treatment under the terms of this policy should raise a complaint in accordance with the Complaints Policy and Procedures. Staff may also refer to the Grievance Procedure where appropriate.

**7.3** A full record of all complaints relating to equality and diversity is retained.

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

**8.1** The Principal is responsible for the development of appropriate monitoring systems to ensure the effective application of the policy and the provision of management reports.

**8.2** The Board of Trustees will monitor equality and diversity data as part of their performance monitoring data.

**8.3** This policy is reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees bi-annually.

## **9. Questions about this Policy**

**9.1** We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. If you would like to recommend changes, please contact the Guild's office.

**9.2** We are committed to making our policies accessible. If you require a different format, please contact the Guild's office

**9.3** If you require further guidance or clarification regarding any aspect of this policy, please do not hesitate to contact the Principal.

## **Annex A: Protected Characteristics**

### **1. Age**

**1.1** It is unlawful to discriminate because of an adult's age.

**1.2 Example: Discrimination** It is discrimination to set a minimum or maximum age for applicants for a role. All applicants who meet legitimate eligibility criteria set out in the role and person specifications must be considered.

**1.3 Example: Not discrimination** Fitness levels naturally decline with age. It is not discrimination to set minimum fitness levels for a role if it is a legitimate requirement (e.g., a multi-stage fitness test for a physically demanding role).

### **2. Disability**

**2.1** It is illegal to discriminate because someone is disabled. A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**2.2 Reasonable Adjustments** Adjustments should be made where necessary and possible to enable access to activities, services, and facilities for everyone. To determine if adjustments are reasonable, the Guild considers resources, health and safety, cost/practicality, and the detriment to the person if adjustments are not made .

**2.3 Learning Difficulties and Disabilities** It is possible to have learning difficulties and not be disabled, though an individual's abilities must be assessed by a qualified professional.

- a) A learning difficulty will affect the individual's ability to develop reading, writing, and maths skills.
- b) A learning disability affects the way the individual understands information and how they communicate. This makes it difficult to learn new skills and cope independently.

**2.4 Education and Training Assessments** Reasonable adjustments should be made for students who have learning difficulties and disabilities regarding the process by which attainment and competence are assessed.

- a) Legitimate adjustments may include: providing readers, interpreters, amanuenses, rest breaks, extra time, assistants, flexible deadlines, or alternative assessment methods.
- b) Adjustments should not compromise the validity of assessed qualifications or the "competence standard" (the academic/medical standard required).
- c) Discussion with the students themselves is vital to ensure the most appropriate adjustments are made, as students may not be aware of all legitimate options.

### **3. Gender Reassignment**

**3.1** Gender refers to socially constructed characteristics. The majority of people in the UK are cisgender (biological sex aligns with gender identity). People who are not cisgender are protected from discrimination.

**3.2** To be protected from gender reassignment discrimination the person:

- a) May be proposing to reassign their gender; or

- b) Is undergoing a process to reassign their gender; or
- c) Has been granted a Gender Recognition Certificate in accordance with the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

**3.3** Knowledge that a person has been granted a Gender Recognition Certificate is protected information. Disclosing this in an official capacity without consent is a criminal offence.

**3.4** Non-binary genders, whilst not explicitly recognized in legislation, are also protected.

## **4. Marriage and Civil Partnerships**

**4.1** Marriages and civil partnerships are legal contracts between two people where they have defined rights and responsibilities towards each other. A marriage or civil partnership may be between people of different sexes or the same sex.

**4.2** It is illegal to discriminate because a person is married, in a civil partnership, or not married/in a civil partnership.

## **5. Pregnancy and Maternity**

**5.1** It is unlawful to discriminate because a person is pregnant or on maternity leave. This includes unfavourable treatment due to:

- Pregnancy.
- Giving birth in the previous 26 weeks.
- Breast-feeding.
- Being on compulsory, ordinary, or additional maternity leave.

**5.2** If a person has a stillbirth after 24 weeks of pregnancy, they are protected from discrimination for 26 weeks after the stillbirth.

## **6. Race**

**6.1** It is unlawful to discriminate because of a person's skin colour, nationality, or ethnic/national/racial origins.

## **7. Religion and Beliefs**

**7.1** It is illegal to discriminate because someone holds a religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. (Note: There are certain exemptions for religious organisations).

## **8. Sex**

**8.1** It is illegal to discriminate because of the sex registered at birth and recorded on the birth certificate.

**8.2** It is not discrimination to:

- a) Provide services on a single-sex basis if it has a legitimate purpose (e.g., a women's refuge).
- b) Run single-sex sporting activities for fairness of competition, or to ensure safety in contact sports.

## **9. Sexual Orientation**

**9.1** It is illegal to discriminate because a person's sexual orientation is towards people of the opposite sex, the same sex, or either sex.

## **Annex B: Definitions of Discrimination**

**Direct Discrimination** Treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others.

**Indirect Discrimination** Putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.

**Harassment** Unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them.

**Victimisation** Treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment.

**Unconscious Bias** It is normal human behaviour to rely on life experience when making judgements. However, sometimes our beliefs and views about other people are based on simple characterisations which may be wrong or unreasonable.