



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Connect Foundation is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our staff and volunteers to be truly representative of all sections of society and those we serve, and for everyone to feel respected and able to give their best.

Connect Foundation is also committed to standing against the unlawful discrimination of anyone in the general public.

Our policy's purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all
2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:
 - pay and benefits
 - terms and conditions of employment
 - dealing with grievances and discipline
 - dismissal
 - redundancy
 - leave for parents
 - requests for flexible working
 - selection for employment, promotion, training or other development opportunities

Our commitments

Connect Foundation commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion as they are good practice and make business sense.
2. Create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued.
3. Take seriously all complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Make decisions concerning staff based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
6. Review all practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
7. Monitor how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Agreement to follow this policy

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by the trustees and will be implemented across Connect Foundation.

Our disciplinary and grievance procedures

Details of the organisation's complaints policy and procedures can be provided on request.

Date Adopted: June 2023

Date to be reviewed: June 2025