

The Cranleigh and District U3A Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Cranleigh and District U3A (Cranleigh u3a) is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from each other (peer to peer learning). Cranleigh u3a is committed to making sure that Cranleigh u3a is as inclusive and welcoming as possible.

Aims of this policy

This policy has been drawn up to comply with the Equalities 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

Cranleigh 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 appropriate behaviour between members and by the Management Committee (the Committee) 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. The Committee will review the reasonable adjustments needed for all members, and individual members with particular needs, on an ongoing basis. Where necessary, the Committee will seek guidance and additional support from the Third Age Trust (the Trust).

Practical approaches to inclusion

Cranleigh u3a will seek to ensure that all new members are aware of our policies and procedures in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and accessibility, as well as the Member Code of Conduct. Cranleigh 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
 - accessibility to wheelchair users
 - access to PA system or 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 Cranleigh u3a
 - making communications available to those who do not have access to the internet
- Recruiting new members
 - doing outreach sessions and contacting agencies working with community groups who may be hard to reach
 - encouraging members who are representative of the groups who are underrepresented within Cranleigh u3a to assist with the recruitment process
 - managing growth so that we ensure that new members can be accommodated
- Monitoring
 - Cranleigh 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
 - the Committee will seek to ensure that Cranleigh u3a remains attractive and accessible to all
- Tasks and Roles
 - ensuring a range of people can have their voices heard by encouraging more members to take on roles such as leading groups
 - Cranleigh u3a will appoint an Accessibility Officer whose role it will be to 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 Group Leader Coordinator will ensure that new Group Leaders are made aware of issues relating 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
 - Cranleigh u3a will offer induction and training around equality, diversity and inclusion to Committee members and Group Leaders as necessary

Code of Conduct

Cranleigh u3a has a Member Code of Conduct. The code of conduct outlines that members should abide by Cranleigh u3a's policies and procedures, as well as treating each other with dignity and respect. This would include not acting in a way that would be deemed discriminatory or offensive.

Dealing with discrimination and harassment

Where the Committee becomes aware of any discriminatory practice or harassment, the Committee will seek to address this through consultation with all parties concerned. If any member of Cranleigh u3a feels they have experienced or witnessed discriminatory behaviour, harassment or offensive behaviour, this should be reported to the Committee and a decision will be made, in line with Cranleigh u3a's 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, 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, or sex.

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.