

Re-Utilise Resource Centre

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

(June 2023)

Re-Utilise Resource Centre Ltd recognise that they are part of a multicultural and diverse society. Every human being is unique and is to be valued for who they are. All staff, residents, and stakeholders (anyone who has an interest in Re-Utilise Resource Centre) have valuable contributions to make to the ongoing development of Re-Utilise Resource Centre as an organisation. Re-Utilise Resource Centre to foster an environment of mutual respect and collaboration.

Staff and Volunteers

Re-Utilise Resource Centre Ltd strive to offer an opportunity all staff and volunteers who apply to the project, irrespective of:

- Colour
- Nationality
- Disability
- Religious belief
- Gender reassignment
- Marital status
- Political affiliation
- Race
- Ethnic and National origin
- Age
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Responsibility for Dependents
- Health Status physical and Mental Health

This will be informed by both current Government legislation and 'best practice'.

Legislation

The **Equalities Act 2010** was passed on 8 April 2010 and most of the provisions of the Act have now come into force.

The **Act** provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance **equality** of opportunity for all. It provides Britain with a discrimination **law** which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more **equal** society.

The Act simplifies and has replaced the large number of Acts and Regulations, which formed the basis of anti-discrimination law such as the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. This act also attempts to '**iron out**' previous inconsistencies in relation to these various acts.

The Act defines the various kinds of **discrimination** by reference to characteristics which are protected under the Act.

What types of characteristics are protected by the Act?

The Act protects the following characteristics (referred to in the Act as "protected characteristics"):

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment

- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

There are four main types of discrimination.

- Direct discrimination

This means treating one person worse than another person because of a protected characteristic. For example, a promotion comes up at work. The employer believes that people's memories get worse as they get older so does not tell one of his older employees about it, because he thinks the employee would not be able to do the job.

- Indirect discrimination

This can happen when an organisation puts a rule or a policy or a way of doing things in place which has a worse impact on someone with a protected characteristic than someone without one. For example, a local authority is planning to redevelop some of its housing. It decides to hold consultation events in the evening. Many of the female residents complain that they cannot attend these meetings because of childcare responsibilities.

- Harassment

This means people cannot treat you in a way that violates your dignity, or creates a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. For example, a man with Down's syndrome is visiting a pub with friends. The bar staff make derogatory and offensive comments about him, which upset and offend him.

- Victimisation

This means people cannot treat you unfairly if you are acting under the Equality Act (like making a complaint of discrimination), or if you are supporting someone else who is doing so. For example, an employee makes a complaint of sexual harassment at work and is dismissed consequently.

Another key piece of legislation is the Human Rights Act 1998:

The act sets out the rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. It links to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), and bring it into domestic UK law. The act is set out as 'Articles', with each one dealing with a different right; they are often known as the convention rights:

- Article 2: Right to life
- Article 3: Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment
- Article 4: Freedom from slavery and forced labour.
- Article 5: Right to liberty and security
- Article 6: Right to a fair trial
- Article 7: No punishment without law
- Article 8: Respect for your private and family life, home, and correspondence
- Article 9: Freedom of thought, belief, and religion
- Article 10: Freedom of expression
- Article 11: Freedom of assembly and association
- Article 12: Right to marry and start a family.
- Article 14: Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms
- Protocol 1, Article 1: Right to peaceful enjoyment of your property
- Protocol 1, Article 2: Right to education
- Protocol 1, Article 3: Right to participate in free elections.
- Protocol 13, Article 1: Abolition of the death penalty

The changes it brings means that you can take your case to a court in the UK rather than heading to the European court of human rights in France. It also means that public bodies such as the police and schools have standards, they need to meet to respect your human rights.

Equality and **diversity** are all about **promoting** and **accepting** the things that **distinguish** us from our neighbours. It is about **ensuring** that you are receptive to the needs of those with unique characteristics; that you are supportive and inclusive of them. This is what an equality and diversity policy represent.

This can be demonstrated in numerous ways, for example:

- If a person has issues with hearing, then ensure that they can access services and equipment that will promote the person's quality of life and ability to engage with life in relation to the degree of hearing loss that is being experienced.
- If English is not a person's first language, ensure that an interpreter can be available to both enable the person to understand better what is being discussed and to give the person the opportunity to express their own thoughts and feelings. Also look to providing leaflets in the person's own language and ensure that appointment letters are written in the person's own language.

Staff

Staff at Re-Utilise Resource Centre are committed to and strive to being approachable in the way in which they communicate with colleagues, and members of the public, to promote diversity and inclusiveness in the organisation.

Supporting staff

- To ensure that staff understand the principles of equality and diversity and their role in promotion of these principles.
- Maintain dignity at Work to all employees Make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff in accordance with the Disability Discrimination.
- Be aware of cultural or religious days of importance and recognise that individuals may need to observe these in a way they feel is appropriate.

- Seek to make provision for regular **prayer** and **worship** where possible and practical.
- Provide flexibility to staff in relation to hours, leave, location, travel, and other work requirements that may significantly impact on their personal life and responsibilities.
- Having a clear policy and definitions, standards of behaviour and safe and accessible ways for staff to report bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the workplace.

It is the responsibility of Re-Utilise Resource Centre Ltd Board of Directors to **monitor** and **ensure** that this equality and diversity policy is carried out in a consistent and fair manner.