



## U3a in Bath

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

#### Statement

u3a is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members no longer in full time employment, 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). u3a recognises that some people are particularly likely to experience discrimination and harassment and is committed to making sure that u3a is as inclusive and welcoming as possible.

#### Aims of this policy

This policy has been drawn up to comply with the 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

u3a in Bath 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 u3a in Bath Committee Members and group Convenors. 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 u3a in Bath 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 u3aPlus sub-committee and/or National Office.

#### Practical approaches to inclusion

u3a in Bath will make sure all new members are aware of our policies and procedures in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, and accessibility. u3a in Bath 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 including:
  - Accessible to wheelchair users
  - Access to PA system and 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 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
- Monitoring:
  - u3a in Bath 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 u3a in Bath Committee will review the diversity of the membership on an ongoing basis and will seek to ensure that the u3a remains attractive and accessible to all.
- Tasks and Roles:
  - U3ainbath will ensure a range of people get their voices heard by encouraging more members to take on roles such as leading groups.
  - The Groups Advisers will ensure that new Group Convenors are made aware of issues in relation to accessibility and what steps they may need to take in meeting access requirements. Group Convenors should notify prospective members in advance of specific levels of fitness or mobility required to participate.
  - It is important that individuals are able to take full responsibility for their own participation in interest groups and events. Should the situation arise when a member no longer feels confident of participating fully without needing help, it will be necessary for that person to be accompanied by a companion/carer who will be covered by the liability insurance provided by the Third Age Trust whilst in attendance. Members who are willing to help cannot take responsibility for another member's care as this could be deemed to be outside U3A insurance cover if any injury or damage resulted.
  - The majority of groups should, however, be ready to encourage carers to accompany members with special needs, or whenever practicable and with a little ingenuity, to adapt venues to optimise access.
  - Additional information around equality, diversity and inclusion for Committee Members and Group Convenors is available on the national u3a website; <https://www.u3a.org.uk/members-area/support/diversity-and-inclusion>

## **Dealing with discrimination and harassment**

Where the u3ainbath Committee becomes 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 u3ainbath 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 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 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.

Date amended: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Signed: Chair Judy Green

Secretary Sue Oldfield