



Guide to...

Equality and

Diversity



Explore
Experience
Progress



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What do we mean



WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY?

In the UK the terms 'equality' and 'diversity' are sometimes used interchangeably but they actually mean different things;

- Equality is about all individuals being treated fairly, with everyone having an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- Diversity is about difference and the importance of recognising individual differences and treating people according to their individual needs.

This guide covers broad equality and diversity issues at work. If you identify yourself to have a disability, you may also wish to refer to our '[Guide to Disability and Work](#)' for more detailed information.



EQUALITY ACT 2010: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

In the UK, it is against the law to discriminate against anyone at work because of:

Age
Disability
Gender reassignment
Marriage and civil partnership
Race
Religion or belief
Sex
Sexual orientation

These are 'protected characteristics', for which you are legally protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010.

Discrimination can include:

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 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

(Source: www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights/types-of-discrimination)

Legal protection from discrimination in the workplace may relate to a number of work areas and includes, for example: recruitment processes; working hours; pay and benefits; career development; managing people; dismissal, redundancy and retirement.

All businesses have a responsibility to ensure that they follow the relevant rules and regulations of the Equality Act and many work places may have their own Equality and Diversity policy.

EQUALITY MONITORING FORMS

Some employers may use an Equality Monitoring Form as part of their recruitment processes, particularly if the method of application is via an application form (rather than a CV).

Equality Monitoring Forms, when used, may ask an applicant questions that relate to their age, whether or not they identify themselves to have a disability, their sex, their sexual orientation, their ethnicity and/or their religious beliefs.

Employers are not required by law to use an Equality Monitoring Form, but some employers may use one to help them understand if there are particular groups of people who are not applying for advertised roles. If this is the case, it allows employers to assess if their recruitment processes are fair.

If an employer does use an Equality Monitoring Form as part of their recruitment processes, they should give you the choice, as an applicant, whether you want to answer the questions or not. Most forms will include the option to tick 'prefer not to say' for each question. If you do complete an Equality Monitoring Form, the employer must not use the information you have provided on the form to discriminate against you.

JOB SEARCHING

The majority of employers seek to ensure they have a diverse workforce and that there is equality of opportunity for all candidates applying for opportunities. If, however, you have any concerns about being treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic, there are some steps you can take:

- Spend time researching employers, by checking their websites, social media presence, and recruitment pages. Does the employer make reference to an Equality and Diversity policy, for example in its recruitment documents? If so, does the employer highlight specific information about protected characteristics and how it ensures fairness at work?
- Does the employer use recognised equality and diversity logos on its website?
- Is there evidence on the employer's website of community based projects or initiatives that could indicate inclusivity?
- Does the employer use inclusive language on its website, for example, gender-neutral pronouns?
- Do the Human Resource pages of the employer's website mention a dedicated Equality and Diversity Officer?
- Does the employer provide information about the proportion of staff it employs from diverse backgrounds?
- Attend careers fairs to give you the opportunity to find out more about the culture of the organisation and understand the diversity of its workforce through talking to staff who work there.
- Check to see if employers are members of relevant business networks that promote diversity (see 'additional resources' section).
- Use the resource links below to seek advice from support organisations who may be able to signpost you to employers who take equality and diversity seriously.

THE DECISION TO DISCLOSE

It is your decision whether you decide to disclose to an employer a 'protected characteristic' (see Equality Act 2010 above for a full list of protected characteristics). Please note, there are a small number of exceptions where equality law may be different and where employers are able to ask questions about an individual in order to decide whether to shortlist them for a job (for example, a women's refuge may have a genuine occupational reason to want to only employ women counsellors).

The decision whether or not to disclose will be a personal one. For some individuals, the decision to disclose may be based on their perception that the protected characteristic they identify with could have an impact in their job role. For example, an individual's religious beliefs may require certain adjustments should an individual need time in the day to pray.

BEING POSITIVE ABOUT DISCLOSURE

If you do decide to disclose, always be positive in doing so. There may be work-related transferable skills that you can highlight. For example, you might be involved in local community groups and take a

role in supporting others or working with committee members. There may be other ways in which your circumstances have had a positive impact on your approach to work and life and the qualities you possess.

WHEN TO DISCLOSE

If you decide to disclose, consider at what stage of the recruitment process you might want to do so. At the initial stage of submitting a CV or application form there may be extra-curricular activities you are involved in, such as membership to university or community societies that could indicate a personal characteristic. If you decide to disclose at interview, consider how you will do so and what you will say.

Think about questions the employer might want to ask you, particularly if the employer is anticipating that reasonable adjustments (see the 'Guide to Disability and Work' for further information) might need to be made. Make sure that by disclosing you are adding some value to yourself as a candidate – be positive! If you decide to disclose at a later stage be aware of any obligations the employer has by law to ensure fairness of opportunity to you in your role.



SUPPORT

ACAS (ADVISORY, CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION SERVICE)

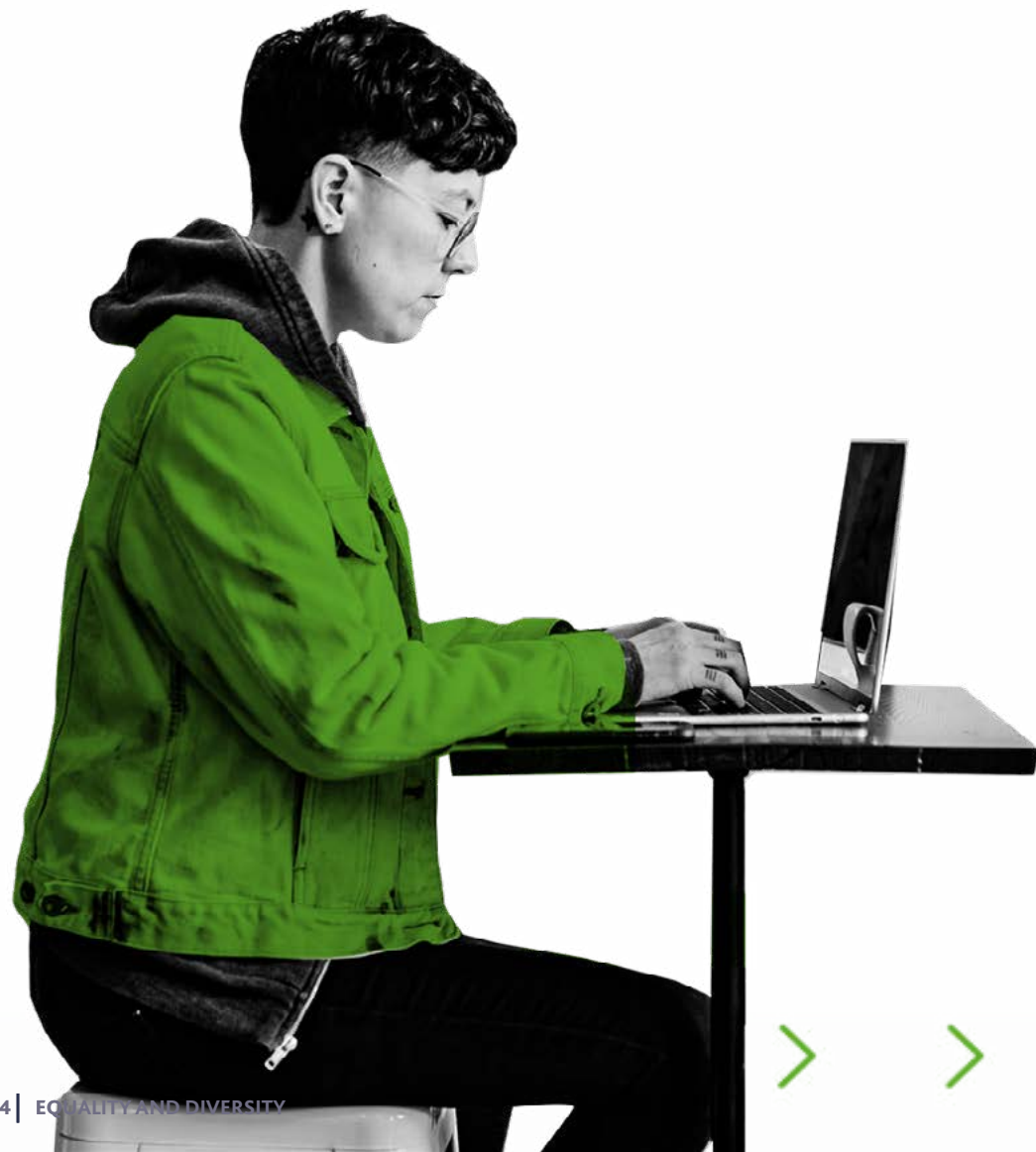
Free and confidential advice to employees on all aspects of workplace relations and employment law.
www.acas.org.uk

EQUALITY ADVISORY SUPPORT SERVICE (EASS)

For individuals who need expert information, advice and support on discrimination.
www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

CITIZENS ADVICE

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/discrimination-at-work



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

■ GENERAL

TARGETJOBS
<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity>

THE DIVERSITY GROUP INCLUSIVE TOP 50 EMPLOYERS
<http://inclusivetop50.co.uk>

EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/know-your-rights

BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY (tackling fairness and equality of opportunity)
www.bitc.org.uk

■ AGE

TARGETJOBS (with section on age)
<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity/668665-equality-and-diversity-issues-and-your-graduate-job-hunt>

AGEUK
www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/work-learning/discrimination-rights/the-equality-act

■ DISABILITY

See 'Guide to Disability and Work'.

■ GENDER REASSIGNMENT

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/gender-reassignment-discrimination

BEAUMONT SOCIETY
www.beaumontsociety.org.uk

■ MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/marriage-and-civil-partnership-discrimination

■ RACE

TARGETJOBS (with section on race)
<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity/668665-equality-and-diversity-issues-and-your-graduate-job-hunt>

EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/race-discrimination

CREATIVE ACCESS (supporting young people from under-represented communities access opportunities in the creative sector)
<https://creativeaccess.org.uk/about-us/>

■ RELIGION AND BELIEF

TARGETJOBS (with section on religion and belief)
<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity/668665-equality-and-diversity-issues-and-your-graduate-job-hunt>

EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/religion-or-belief-discrimination

■ SEX

TARGETJOBS (with section on sex)
<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity/668665-equality-and-diversity-issues-and-your-graduate-job-hunt>

EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/sex-discrimination

■ SEXUAL ORIENTATION

TARGETJOBS (with section on sexual orientation)
<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/equality-and-diversity/668665-equality-and-diversity-issues-and-your-graduate-job-hunt>

EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/sexual-orientation-discrimination

STONEWALL TOP 100 INCLUSIVE EMPLOYERS
www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/top-100-employers-2020

PROUD EMPLOYERS
www.proudemployers.org.uk

Bath Spa Careers and Employability is here to help you get a great start to your career. We are open year round, so to find out more about how we can support you go to: www.bathspa.ac.uk/careers

As a student or recent graduate, **MyCareer** is your online portal for booking events, accessing appointments, submitting queries, and searching for jobs and placements.

You can also follow @bathspacareers on social media:
Facebook | Twitter | YouTube | LinkedIn | Instagram

Every effort has been made to ensure the information in this resource guide is accurate but we recommend that you check all details carefully.

The University is committed to the promotion of equality and diversity. If you require this publication in an alternative format, please go to **MyCareer** to submit a request via 'Questions'.

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