**Maghull and Lydiate U3A**

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

**Policy Statement**

We all have a responsibility to respect each other as equals, accepting that we are all different and ensuring we all have the same opportunities. Maghull and Lydiate U3A (the U3A) is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables people that meet the membership criteria to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from each other. The U3A recognise that some people could experience discrimination and harassment during U3A activities, therefore the U3A is committed to making sure that the organisation is as safe, inclusive and welcoming as possible.

**Aims of this Policy**

This policy has been drawn up to ensure that the U3A fully complies with the Equality Act 2010. **It is against the law** for an organisation to treat someone unfairly on the basis of what the Act calls ‘protected characteristics’, which are:

* Age;
* Disability;
* Gender Reassignment;
* Marriage and Civil Partnership;.
* Pregnancy and Maternity;
* Race;
* Religion or Belief;
* Sex;
* Sexual Orientation.

The U3A will endeavour to ensure that members do not experience discrimination on the basis of their protected characteristics. This will include ensuring as far as possible, equal access to groups.

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 where this does not infringe upon other members protected rights under the act

**Practical Approaches to Inclusion**

The U3A will make sure all new members are aware of our policies and procedures in relation to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and accessibility as well as the Member Code of Conduct. The U3A will endeavour to 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.
* When necessary, as far as reasonably possible, consider the suitability of meeting venues.
* Recruiting new members
* Monitoring
* Tasks and Roles

**Code of Conduct**

The U3A has a member code of conduct. The code of conduct outlines that member’s should abide by the 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.

**Action against Discrimination**

The U3A can do something voluntarily to help people with a protected characteristic. This is called ‘positive action’.

Taking positive action is legal if people with a protected characteristic:

* are at a disadvantage
* have particular needs
* are under-represented in an activity or type of work

**Dealing with Discrimination and Harassment**

Where the U3A Committee become aware of any potentially 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 the U3A 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 as to what steps will be taken to address the issue, in line with the U3A’s Constitution and formal procedures within Standing Orders using the Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures for guidance,.

**Communication**

The U3A will make its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedures available to all members and will also regularly review the policy and procedures to update any relevant legislation, policies and procedural changes.

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