



# **Equalities Policy Documents**

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## Equal Opportunities Policy

### Introduction

The United Reformed Church believes that all people are created in God's image and are loved by God. In his ministry Jesus showed God's love by his openness to all people, including those who were marginalised in his day.

### Statement of intent

The United Reformed Church affirms its commitment to show the same openness to all people in today's world. It intends in spirit and in deed to promote equality of opportunity and diversity in all spheres of its activity and is committed to behaving as an equal opportunity organisation. It acknowledges that people are called to be diverse and lively, inclusive and flexible through the sharing of the gospel.

### Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy Statement

Exclusion and discrimination can occur on many grounds including those recognised in law, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, colour, ethnic or national origin, age, marital status and disability. The United Reformed Church seeks to eradicate less favourable treatment in these areas by endeavouring to:

- Build inclusive communities where all will be treated with dignity and respect and have equality of opportunity to contribute their gifts to the common life;
- Identify and remove barriers to participation in employment, training, promotion, leadership and representation on church committees and in the attitudes and actions of every congregation;
- Take positive action to counter attitudes and practices contrary to this statement of intent ;
- Define within the law when being of a particular religion or belief is or is not a requirement for any post within the church.
- Develop detailed policies to give effect to these requirements; and monitor and report on progress in fulfilling these requirements.

This policy is the overarching equality and diversity direction of the United Reformed Church and should be read in conjunction with The United Reformed Church's declaration that it is a multicultural church and its equality policies on employment, church activities, membership, committees and councils.

October 2006



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## **ISLAND HOUSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES PROTOCOLS**

*(last updated June 2010)*

### **Policies**

Our Equal Opportunities policy and Equalities Method statement are kept in the POLICIES file in the Director's office and electronically on the Director's PC. All policies are available to all staff, volunteers, clients, stakeholders and funders on request. They are maintained and updated as necessary by the Island House Committee and regularly reviewed as part of our continuous Quality Assurance (PQASSO) system procedures.

### **Recruitment & Promotions:**

ADVERTISING wherever possible should be public not just in-house, using local free press (e.g. East End Life) accessible to all Tower Hamlets residents, or national press.

APPLICATION FORMS should be sent out with Job Descriptions and Person Specifications to all enquirers. Forms should not ask for applicant's age, faith, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation. Forms should be simple and clear, and made as accessible as possible for those with sight or language difficulties.

SHORT-LISTING should be done by a group not an individual, with any personal relationships / interests fully and openly declared. A consistent scoring system based on the J.D. and person spec issued to all applicants should be used.

INTERVIEWS should be conducted by more than one person, with any personal relationships / interests fully and openly declared. Similar and consistent areas of questioning should be used for each candidate. Questions should only relate to their ability and competence for the role in question.

DECISION MAKING should be made as close to the interviews as possible and must not make judgements based on issues of gender, age, ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation that may have become apparent at interview. Applicants should be informed of the outcome of their application as soon as practicable with a degree of feedback as to why they have or haven't been successful.

### **Training:**

All staff are encouraged to look for and offered regular opportunities for any training and personal development opportunities that would enhance their performance in their duties, including First Aid, Equal Opportunities, Tolerance & Diversity, Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults, Health & Safety, IHCC Employment Handbook, and other courses appropriate to their specific duties and required skills. All appropriate training should be available to all staff regardless of their length of employment, gender, age, ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation. All training delivered at Island House should always be in well signposted and fully accessible venues.

**ISLAND HOUSE  
COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**METHOD STATEMENT  
Equal Opportunities & Equalities  
June 2010**

**Island House seeks to fully comply with all UK and European equalities legislation, including:**

- Race Regulations Act 1976 (and ammended 2000)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1976 (and amended 1986)
- Equal Pay Act (1984)
- Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Employment regulations for Religious Belief and Sexual Orientation
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

**Equal Opportunities Policy** - Island House has adopted the Equal Opportunities Policy of our Trustees at the United Reformed Church (Oct 2006). See appendix 1 attached.

**Action Plan** – Island House monitors and reviews Equal opportunities and equalities policies and procedures through regular bi-monthly meetings of its Management Committee. The Committee ensures all activities fully comply with current policies and regulations and delegate Committee members or staff as appropriate to take whatever action may be necessary from time to time to update this.

**Responsible person** - the policy and procedures for equalities are the responsibility of the Convenor / Chair of the Committee who delegates day to day management to the Centre Director.

**Implementation** – All existing staff have received training on equalities and equal opportunities at their induction or since. All new staff receive full induction training in the first week of commencement of their employment. This is reinforced through a programme of on-going training and development days.

The induction includes the issuing of the Island House Employment Handbook and training on in-house policies and procedures including the disciplinary and grievance procedures detailed in the Handbook and all equalities policies.

Equalities policies are applied in our all our recruitment, employment, training and promotions procedures.

The policies are reviewed and checked and reviewed by our in-house Quality Assurance system (PQASSO).

Regular staff supervision meetings and Annual Reviews include reflection on current practice and review of any training needs.