

United Learning Equality & Diversity Guidelines

Scope

The guidance set out in this document applies to all United Church Schools Trust (“UCST”) and United Learning Trust (“ULT”) employees; including teaching, non-teaching, fixed-term, part-time, full-time, permanent and temporary staff. The two companies (UCST and ULT) are referred to in this policy by their trading name, ‘United Learning’. **This guidance also applies to apprentices employed outside of United Learning who are enrolled in an apprenticeship programme through United Learning’s training provider.**

Where this policy refers to ‘School’ or ‘Head Teacher’, within United Learning’s Central Office this should be interpreted to refer to the department where a member of staff works and their Head of Department.

As a values-led organisation and training provider, our values of ambition, confidence, creativity, respect, enthusiasm and determination are key to our purpose and underpin all that we do.

1. Our Commitment

United Learning celebrates the diversity of its staff and apprentices and is fully committed to securing equality of opportunity for everyone.

- United Learning is committed to avoiding all forms of discrimination (see Appendix 1 for definitions of discrimination). In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as “protected characteristics”.1.2 United Learning will not discriminate unlawfully against customers using or seeking to use goods, facilities or services provided by United Learning.
- Employees and apprentices should ensure they do not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability.
- Employees and apprentices should report any bullying or harassment by customers, suppliers, visitors or others to their manager and provider team who will take appropriate action.

2. Equality in Employment

- United Learning will actively avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.
- United Learning will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of apprentice selection and make efforts to ensure the selection process is inclusive.



- Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.
- United Learning will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if United Learning considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. United Learning will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. United Learning will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.
- United Learning will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and apprentice cohort and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

3. Apprenticeships – Equality in Teaching, Learning & Assessment

- All learning resources will be written to avoid bias, stereotyping or discrimination of any kind. Delivery teams will take every opportunity to embed equality and diversity into the teaching and learning process. Awareness of and sign up to Equality and diversity guidelines will be included as an important part of the induction process for all apprentices and reviewed regularly throughout the apprentice journey.
- Robust initial assessment processes will ensure that apprentices identified as having a recognised language need, a disability or learning difficulty will be provided with all the necessary support to meet their learning goals.
- Delivery teams will carry out regular reviews of the apprenticeship curriculum to ensure that it remains accessible to all learners.
- United Learning will also include the views of apprentices, employers and delivery staff in the annual self-assessment and curriculum review processes.

Awareness and engagement

- All employees will have access to these guidelines via the United Hub and apprentices with external employers via the apprenticeships website. They will be distributed and promoted to employees and apprentices initially as part of their induction. Your school or Central Office department is responsible for ensuring you are aware of your responsibilities in accordance with these guidelines. For apprentices, the provider and your manager is responsible for ensuring you are aware of your responsibilities in accordance with these guidelines and will engage you to ensure awareness of guidelines at induction and throughout your programme.



- A copy of the policy will be uploaded to the e-portfolio system for apprentices so that apprentices are able to access the document online at any time throughout their programme.
- United Learning is committed to making training and development opportunities accessible to all its employees and apprentices and will undertake regular monitoring of those who are and are not selected for training events.

5. Your Responsibilities

- Every employee and apprentice is required to assist United Learning to meet its commitment to provide equality in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.
- Employees and apprentices can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, United Learning for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees and apprentices who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.
- Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees, apprentices or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under United Learning's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

6. Grievances

- If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you may use United Learning's grievance procedure to make a complaint. Alternatively, if you feel that you have been subject to harassment and bullying, you should refer to United Learning's Harassment and Bullying policy.
- United Learning will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

7. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure consistency, fairness and effectiveness, and in light of any changes in employment legislation.
- Where we identify any disparity between the engagement or achievement of learner groups, we will ensure that this is not due to unfair or unequal access, treatment, or opportunity.
- We will ensure that where possible we adapt our products and services to make them accessible to all staff and apprentices.
- We will ensure that all contractors and service providers are aware of this policy and adhere to its principles.
- We will ensure that we take every opportunity to effectively promote British values throughout our organisation, including with staff, stakeholders and apprentices. This policy will sit alongside and compliment the Safeguarding and PREVENT Policies. Any individual, be they an



apprentice, staff member or stakeholder can raise concerns about equality and diversity with the provider team by email at courses@unitedlearning.org.uk.

Appendix 1 - Definitions of Discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic (although it does not explicitly include pregnancy and maternity, which is covered by indirect sex discrimination) such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic (although it does not cover harassment because of marriage and civil partnership, and (according to guidance from the Government and Acas) pregnancy and maternity).

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity), by third parties such as clients or customers. For an employer to be liable:

- The harassment must have occurred on at least two previous occasions (although not necessarily by the same harasser or suffering the same type of harassment);



- It must be aware that the previous harassment has taken place; and
- It must have failed to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment from happening again.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need for a complainant to compare his/her treatment with someone who has not made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act 2010. For example, if a blind employee raises a grievance that the employer is not complying with its duty to make reasonable adjustments, and is then systematically excluded from all meetings, such behaviour could amount to victimisation.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Version number:	2.0	Target Audience:	All staff and apprentices
UCST/ULT/Both:	Both	Reason for version change:	Legislation; review of Equality & Diversity strategy
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Date Last Amended & Issued:	August 2021	Name of individual/department responsible:	Kate Bradley – Director of HR
Date of next review: (changes made)	August 2024		
JNC Involvement:	Agreed		



Appendix 1: United Learning Equal Opportunities Statement

United Church Schools Trust and United Learning Trust (“United Learning”) have an Equality Guidelines document, which has been agreed by United Learning Trust’s recognised trade unions.

Below is United Learning’s Equal Opportunities Statement. If you would like to see the complete Policy, it can be accessed on the United Hub or by contacting your school or the provider team.

To ensure that United Learning develops and maintains a working environment in which each individual has complete equality of opportunities.

To ensure that individuals do not suffer discrimination directly or indirectly as a result of their employment with United Learning or deny their application for a position within United Learning.

