

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Policy

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Status	Live
Owner	People & Culture Team
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Key Messages:

- This policy applies to the IOSH group worldwide and all individuals who are employed by or work for IOSH. The policy applies to colleagues, workers, customers, and job applicants, as well as to members and volunteers who represent IOSH.
Additionally, any occupational safety and health (OSH) professionals, external contractors, third parties, or subcontractors providing services on behalf of IOSH are also responsible for adhering to this policy.
- All individuals connected to IOSH should take steps to promote the principles of this policy and contribute to the organisation's aim of providing an inclusive environment for all.
- Colleagues, workers, volunteers and members will have access to a copy of this policy and will be required to read and understand it and will be notified of any changes to the policy.

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Introduction

The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion in our workforce, our membership and beyond.

We recognise that creating a diverse and inclusive culture is essential to achieving our vision of a safer and healthier world of work. We celebrate the importance of diversity and want to draw on varied perspectives to enhance the way we operate.

We are committed to creating an inclusive environment in which IOSH employees, members, volunteers, customers and suppliers are treated fairly, and are able to, participate and achieve their potential. We want to ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are embedded in all our activities, policies, and decisions, and that our workforce and membership reflect the communities in which we operate.

This policy aims to ensure that we build a sustainable future and can continue to deliver on our charitable objects and strategic aims. It will help us to eliminate discrimination and embrace the benefits of being a truly inclusive employer and institution.

Legislation

EDI is part of a human rights framework. Many countries in which we operate subscribe to the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, or regional versions of it, and enshrine aspects of equality in law. The key law which informs our policy is Great Britain's Equality Act 2010, which protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. Under the Equality Act 2010, there are nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Being pregnant or on maternity leave
- Disability
- Race, including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

At IOSH, we want to go further than compliance. In addition to the nine protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010, we are also committed to ensuring fair treatment regardless of differences including gender identity or expression, socio-economic or academic background, physical appearance or body type, location, worker type or contract type.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline IOSH's commitment to EDI within our workforce, membership, the OSH profession and wider society. In line with the Equality Act 2010, we will ensure that no employee, worker, job applicant, member, volunteer, customer, or supplier experiences any unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation or any other prohibited conduct in their dealings with IOSH.

The policy applies to employees, workers, customers and job applicants. It also applies to members and volunteers who represent IOSH. Any OSH professionals, external contractors, third parties or sub-contractors providing services on behalf of IOSH are also responsible for adhering to this policy.

Definitions of EDI

At IOSH we believe that:

Equality aims to eradicate unjustified discrimination and promote human rights and social justice. When we talk about equality at IOSH, we mean treating people fairly and without bias, creating conditions which promote dignity and a culturally sensitive approach.

Diversity means recognising that people, whilst similar in many ways, are also different. Differences include age, disability, ethnicity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, neurodiversity, educational background, economic status, personality, communication style and more. Understanding, valuing, and effectively managing diversity can result in greater participation, benefiting individuals, IOSH and the wider OSH profession.

Inclusion is an active process that aims to create conditions where everyone can thrive. An inclusive environment is one in which everyone feels safe, valued and like they belong, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances.

IOSH understands that equality, diversity and inclusion are not interchangeable but are interdependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not considered, valued and harnessed.

IOSH Commitment

IOSH is committed to integrating EDI into everything we do, guided by the following principles:

- Promoting an environment where equality, dignity and respect apply to all.
- Taking positive steps to tackle unlawful and unfair discrimination, inequality and unfairness.
- Taking reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and other unlawful harassment, developing leaders to foster a culture of fairness, inclusivity and capability.
- Empowering individuals to challenge and address any unfair, discriminatory and inappropriate behaviour.
- Reducing barriers to improve our representation and address existing inequalities.
- Adopting practices that make the best use of individuals' differing skills and talents.

The policy and associated arrangements operate in accordance with statutory legislation, providing an overarching framework to ensure its aims are delivered through all of IOSH's employment policies and procedures.

Roles

Every individual linked to IOSH has the responsibility of embracing and championing the principles of EDI. To ensure a culture of respect and dignity, all individuals will be expected to challenge and report any breaches of the policy. Responsibilities vary depending upon an individual's role and connection to IOSH.

Our Board of Trustees, Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team have expressed their strategic and leadership commitment to embedding, developing and progressing EDI at IOSH.

As part of our leadership and decision making, Leadership Forum (the Executive Leadership Team and all Heads of Service) must:

- Take overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy.
- Ensure this policy is promoted and understood by all stakeholders.
- Consider EDI in all activities and decisions.
- Support and promote EDI initiatives, internally and externally.
- Role model inclusive behaviour.

Additionally, the Chief Executive must take overall accountability for the delivery of the EDI policy.

Managers and designated contacts must:

- Ensure that this policy is communicated to all workers and provide advice, guidance and feedback to workers regarding their conduct.
- Exercise leadership in this field by encouraging inclusion, discouraging prejudice and modelling appropriate behaviour.
- Take appropriate action to deal with any breaches of the policy, or behaviour that could lead to a breach of the policy. Utilise the Disciplinary, Grievance or Dignity at Work policies when necessary and inform the People Team.

All workers (colleagues, volunteers and contractors) must:

- Familiarise themselves with and adhere to this policy.
- Treat colleagues, members and other stakeholders with respect and dignity at all times.

- Challenge any unfair, inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour, either directly, via their Line Manager/Designated Contact or via the People Team.
- Remember that workers can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the organisation, for any act of unlawful discrimination. Workers who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

The People team must:

- Provide training to managers and colleagues to educate them about EDI.
- Ensure that this policy is implemented in a reasonable and fair manner.
- Provide advice and guidance to managers and address any breaches of policy.

Members, customers, supplier and third parties must:

- Familiarise themselves with and adhere to the policy.
- Treat IOSH colleagues, members and other stakeholders with respect and dignity at all times.
- Challenge any unfair, inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour, either directly or via your contact at IOSH.

All individuals connected to IOSH should take steps to promote the principles of this policy and contribute to the organisation's aim of providing an inclusive environment for all.

Our obligations

IOSH recognises and embraces its legal obligations to ensure individuals are not discriminated against in any form, victimised or suffer harassment on the grounds of recognised protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age, gender reassignment, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). In the context of this document, the *Definitions* section provides some useful descriptions.

IOSH is committed to taking reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and other unlawful harassment in accordance with its legal obligations. This includes fostering a respectful working environment, ensuring colleagues understand expected standards of behaviour, assessing potential risks and responding promptly and appropriately to any concerns raised.

IOSH will ensure all individuals have equal access to opportunities to develop the skills needed to maintain an inclusive culture.

IOSH will take steps to challenge prejudice, discrimination and harassment. This policy underpins all decisions the organisation makes, and the actions taken by all individuals linked to IOSH.

Raising concerns

In the first instance, employees will be advised to contact their Line Manager if they feel that they are being treated unfairly at work, or if they believe an act of unfair or unlawful discrimination has occurred, which is a breach of this policy. If the matter is not addressed to the employees' satisfaction, they have the right to raise a formal grievance using IOSH's Grievance Policy. Line Managers maintain a culture where employees can give feedback on any concerns or areas of improvement regarding EDI practices. This will include regular one-to-one meetings and team meetings.

Allegations of harassment, including sexual harassment, will be managed in accordance with this policy and the Dignity at Work and Grievance policies, as appropriate.

Any other individual connected to IOSH will be encouraged to raise their concerns about any possible breaches of this policy with their contact at IOSH or via our enquiry [form](#). The policy cannot be directly applied to third parties with whom we work (contractors and suppliers). However, any EDI issues relating to a third party will be taken seriously and raised with the third party immediately by the relevant manager.

Monitoring

IOSH will regularly monitor and evaluate its decision-making. We will assess the impact of our policies, procedures and processes to ensure fairness and legal compliance to all individuals. Equality Impact Assessments may be used to aid understanding in this area. We will benchmark against best practice and seek feedback, both internally and externally, to achieve our EDI aims.

Collecting EDI data is essential to enable IOSH to continuously review and inform our practices. We will continue to collect data from applicants to the organisation, workers and our membership. All information collated will remain confidential and be anonymised wherever possible. IOSH will ensure it complies with its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Retention and Archive Policy.

If monitoring highlights that areas within IOSH are not representative, or that sections of the workforce or volunteers/members are not progressing appropriately, appropriate action will be taken to address the issue.

Responsibilities

- Every individual linked to IOSH has the responsibility of embracing and championing the principles of EDI. To ensure a culture of respect and dignity, all individuals will be expected to challenge and report any breaches of the policy. Responsibilities vary depending upon an individual's role and connection to IOSH.
- Our Board of Trustees, Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team have expressed their strategic and leadership commitment to embedding, developing and progressing equality, diversity and inclusion at IOSH.
- As part of our leadership and decision making, the Executive Leadership Team and all Heads of Service must:
 - Take overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy.
 - Ensure this policy is promoted and understood by all stakeholders.
 - Consider EDI in all activities and decisions.
 - Support and promote EDI initiatives, internally and externally.
 - Role model inclusive behaviour.
- The People team will maintain the details described within this policy and ensure that it is communicated, understood, and applied within IOSH.
- All colleagues are to understand and comply with the Disciplinary Policy and related procedures or training.
- The Chief Executive must take overall accountability for the delivery of the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Review and communication

This Policy is to be reviewed annually by the Executive Leadership Team and Board of Trustees to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. Employees, workers, volunteers and members will have access to a copy of this policy and will be required to read and understand it and will be notified of any changes to the policy.

Terms, definitions, acronyms and abbreviations

The following definitions are adapted from the Equality Act 2010 and guidance from ACAS (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service).

Protected characteristics

Specific groups that are protected by the Equality Act 2010. There are nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Direct discrimination

When an individual is being treated unfairly because they have a recognised protected characteristic, are thought to have one, or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic. Types of direct discrimination include:

- **discrimination by association**, the unfair treatment of an individual because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- **discrimination by perception**, when someone is treated unfairly because it is thought that they possess a protected characteristic. This applies even if the individual does not possess that characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

When a rule, policy or arrangement applies to a group is less fair to a certain protected characteristic.

Victimisation

The unfair treatment of someone who has made or supported a complaint related to a protected characteristic or being suspected of doing so.

Bullying

Although there is no legal definition of bullying, it can be described as behaviour that is intimidating, malicious or insulting and/or an abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure another person or group.

Harassment

When bullying or unwanted conduct is related to a protected characteristic and has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the individual.

Third party harassment

The harassment of an individual by people not directly employed by the organisation, e.g., customers.

Version history

V	Changes made	Date	Made by
2	Focus on inclusion in line with EDI framework	N/A	Laura Mack (People Business Partner)
3	Updated in line with EDI best practice	Nov 2020	Fayola Francis (EDI Lead)
3.1	Updated following feedback from SLT	May 2022	Fayola Francis (EDI Lead)
4	Simplified language/syntax	Jun 2023	EDI Lead
4.1	Transfer to policy document	Mar 2025	People team
4.2	Updated in line with obligations of the Employment Rights Act 2025	July 2026	Laura Mack, Senior People Business Partner