



Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Scope

This policy applies to all members of Walsgrave Baptist Church's (WBC'S) staff and volunteers.

2. Context

WBC recognises the value of equal opportunities and this policy and statement [7] reflects both the mission and purpose of WBC, and the spirit and intentions of legislation which outlaws discrimination. *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."* (Galatians 3:28)

3. Purpose

To provide information concerning equal opportunities and to provide guidelines for staff and volunteers on good practice.

4. Definition

Discrimination: any unlawful, unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people. Although there may be circumstances justifying different treatment, which are not unlawful (for example, to comply with a genuine occupational requirement for a position), WBC will not tolerate unlawful discrimination and/or harassment on the grounds of an individual's sex, race, marital status, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, religious belief, union membership, union activities, or employment status. Any reference to discrimination in this policy includes all such possible grounds.

5. Policy

- 5.1 In relation to matters of religion and belief, WBC reserves the right to appoint staff who are loyal to the Christian ethos of WBC in order to preserve its distinctiveness in accordance with the Employment Equality Regulations 2003.
- 5.2 WBC is a Christian organisation which seeks to operate in and for the name of Christ. Those who work in WBC must be in sympathy with the evangelical Christian beliefs as set out in the Basis of Faith and their promotion.
- 5.3 For some posts within WBC, more than a loyalty to the Christian ethos of WBC is required and these posts are recognised as having Genuine Occupational Requirements.
- 5.4 WBC recognises that the UK has a rich diversity of cultures from around the world and seeks to bring Christian witness equally to all cultures.
- 5.5 Accordingly, WBC is committed to equal opportunity, and it is its policy to treat job applicants, employees and suppliers in the same way, subject to requiring employees and volunteers to adhere to WBC's ethos statement and code of conduct.

6. Implementation

- 6.1 WBC is an equal opportunity employer. Equal opportunity is about ensuring good employment practices and efficient use of WBC'S most valuable resources: it's employees and volunteers. Every Trustee, Elder, Deacon, member and employee has personal responsibility for implementing the policy. Any instance of doubt about the application of this policy, or other questions, should be directed to the Diaconate.
- 6.2 This policy applies to the advertisement of jobs, recruitment and selection, training, conditions of work, pay and to every other aspect of employment. (Staff involved in recruitment should request training if they have any doubt about the application of this policy.)
- 6.3 Any member of staff may use the grievance procedure to complain about discriminatory conduct. If the matter relates to unlawful harassment, then the grievance may be raised directly with the Leadership team. WBC is concerned to ensure that staff feel able to raise such grievances and no individual will be penalised for raising such a grievance, unless it is untrue and made in bad faith.
- 6.4 The policy also applies equally to the treatment of members, visitors, clients or suppliers. Any concern related to the unequal treatment should be directed to the Diaconate.
- 6.5 Any employee who unlawfully harasses any other employee in the course of their employment will be subject to WBC's Disciplinary Procedure. In serious cases, such behaviour will be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and, as such, will result in summary dismissal in the absence of mitigating circumstances.

7. Equal Opportunities Statement

WBC will not unlawfully discriminate or subject any individual (job applicant or staff member) to less favourable treatment.

WBC aims to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal opportunity to enter employment. In so doing, it will fully consider making reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises to ensure that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability. In addition, when staff members become disabled in the course of their employment, every effort will be made through reasonable adjustment, retraining or redeployment to enable them to remain in the employment of WBC.

After taking into account any genuine occupational requirement, entry into employment and promotion or change of post within WBC is determined by personal merit and ability, relevant to the mission and purpose of WBC.

It is the responsibility of every individual, both staff and volunteer, to eliminate discrimination by ensuring the practical application of the equal opportunities policy and reporting concerns about any possible breach of this policy to a Deacon or the Minister of the church, where appropriate. All allegations of discrimination (including harassment) will be treated seriously. Any unlawful discrimination is totally unacceptable to WBC and perpetrators will face disciplinary action.