



Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Our aim

Every single member of our society is entitled to pursue their hobby in a safe space: a space free of fear, a space free of bullying and harassment of any kind. We will work and play together honouring our differences and celebrating the gifts we each bring to the table. We will treat one another with politeness and respect at all times and, if we are subjected to or witness bullying and harassment, we will speak out knowing that our voices will be heard and we will be taken seriously. Together we can create a Safe Space.

2. About our policy

2.1 This policy is intended to demonstrate Sudbury Dramatic Society's commitment to eliminating discrimination and encouraging and valuing diversity among staff, volunteers, partners, suppliers and users of our services.

2.2 We recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and are committed to meeting them in full. We believe that a culture that embraces equality and values diversity will help us to ensure that everyone feels involved and included in our plans, programmes and activities.

2.3 We aim to create an environment which respects and welcomes everyone, and in which no form of bullying, harassment, disrespectful or discriminatory behaviour is tolerated by anyone towards anyone. This particularly applies in relation to the 'protected characteristics' named in the Equality Act 2010: Age, disability, gender reassignment, income, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (as further detailed below).

3. Our responsibilities

3.1 Sudbury Dramatic Society understands that for equality to be achieved this policy needs to be made understandable to, and embraced by, all members and will therefore make it available on the website and in the welcome pack for new members.

3.3 All members have a responsibility to ensure that their own language and actions are consistent with the spirit as well as the contents of this policy.

3.4 Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the committee as a whole, and with the Chairperson and the Safeguarding and Children's Officer in particular

4. Our commitments

4.1 Sudbury Dramatic Society recognises that an Equality and Diversity Policy alone is not enough to ensure that equality and diversity are central to everything that we do.

4.2 We will seek to create an environment in which diversity and the contributions of all members and partners are recognised and valued in all that we do. In this way we hope to provide an example of good equality practice and promote community cohesion.

4.3 In introducing this policy we recognise that some people are unfamiliar with the ways in which discrimination and disadvantage affect people's health, wellbeing and quality of life. We will therefore support people to develop equalities awareness and understanding.

4.4 To ensure that we are meeting the aims and the spirit of this policy we will:

- a. discuss and review how well we are implementing this policy, and adjust our practices/develop an action plan where necessary;
- b. assess any significant new or revised policies and procedures for their impact on equality;
- c. embed equality and diversity into our development plans;
- d. ensure our employment practices and procedures are consistent with the aims of this policy.

5. Working with contractors, suppliers and partners

It is important to us that suppliers, contractors and any other individual or organisation working alongside us are aware of and agree to comply with our equality and diversity policy while that work is underway.

6. Review and Action

We recognise that it is important for us to regularly review this policy to ensure that it reflects up to date equality legislation and best practice.

Equality Act 2010 - Explanation of the Protected Characteristics

Age: An age group includes people of the same age and people of a particular range of ages. Where people fall in the same age group they share the protected characteristic of age. An age group would include “over fifties” or twenty-one year olds. A person aged twenty-one does not share the same characteristic of age with “people in their forties”. However, a person aged twenty-one and people in their forties can share the characteristic of being in the “under fifty” age range. *(Note: The Quay Theatre may administer projects or services aimed at specific age groups. This is not intended to exclude those outside that specific age group; but to aid in researching and providing effective help to specific groups of beneficiaries)*

Disability: A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This section replaces similar provisions in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and provisions in secondary legislation made under that Act.

Gender reassignment: A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person’s sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

Marriage and civil partnership: A person has the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if the person is married or is a civil partner.

- A person who is engaged to be married is not married and therefore does not have this protected characteristic.
- A divorcee or a person whose civil partnership has been dissolved is not married or in a civil partnership and therefore does not have this protected characteristic.

Race: Race is defined as:

- a. Colour: includes being black or white.
 - b. Nationality: includes being a British, Australian or Swiss citizen, etc.
 - c. Ethnic or national origins: includes being from a Roma background or of Chinese heritage.
- A racial group could be “black Britons” which would encompass those people who are both black and who are British citizens.

This section replaces similar provisions in the Race Relations Act 1976. However, the power to add caste to the definition of race is a new provision.

Religion or belief: Religion means any religion and a reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion.

A religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered to be a religion or belief, such as Protestants and Catholics within Christianity. A belief means any religious or philosophical belief and a reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief. A “philosophical belief” must

- Be genuinely held;
- Be a belief and not an opinion or viewpoint based on the present state of information available;
- Be a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour;
- Attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance;
- Be worthy of respect in a democratic society, compatible with human dignity and not conflict with the fundamental rights of others.

Any cult involved in illegal activities is not covered. Beliefs such as humanism and atheism would be covered.

This section replaces similar provisions in the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 and the Equality Act 2006.

Sex:

- a. a reference to a person who has a particular protected characteristic is a reference to a man or to a woman;
- b. a reference to persons who share a protected characteristic is a reference to persons of the same sex.

(Note: In addition to the above, The Quay Theatre aims to respect all gender identities. This includes terms such as Non-Binary and GenderFluid.)

Sexual orientation: is a person’s sexual orientation towards:

- people of the same sex as him or her (in other words the person is a gay man or a lesbian)
- people of the opposite sex from him or her (the person is heterosexual)
- people of both sexes (the person is bisexual)

(Note: The Quay Theatre endeavours to recognize and respect the wide variety of sexual orientations that exist, and would include additional terms in the above. Such as;

- *People of multiple sexes including non-binary genders (the person is pansexual)*
- *Lack of any sexual orientation (the person is asexual)*

The definition is designed to replicate the effect of similar provisions in the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Equality Act 2006.