

COUNTESTHORPE U3A

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. INITIAL PRINCIPLES

Countesthorpe U3A strives to achieve a membership which reflects the composition of the community it serves. It is committed to the furtherance of fair treatment and the absence of discrimination in all its activities and in all its contacts with external organisations and members of the general public.

Countesthorpe U3A is dedicated to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture within its membership, for it is in its best interest to promote diversity and eliminate discrimination within the organisation.

This policy reinforces Countesthorpe U3A's commitment to providing equality and fairness to all in our organisation and not provide less favourable facilities or treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, or sex and sexual orientation. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

All members will be treated fairly and with respect and will be given help and encouragement to develop their full potential and utilise their unique talents.

2. COMMITMENT

Countesthorpe U3A will endeavour to fulfil the following:-

- a) To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all members are recognised and valued.
- b) To create the best environment which promotes dignity and respect for every member.
- c) To not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying, or harassment, and to take action with those that breach this policy.
- d) To encourage anyone who feels they have been subjected to discrimination to raise their concerns so that corrective measures can be applied.
- e) To encourage all members to treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- f) To regularly review all practices and procedures so that fairness is maintained at all times.

3. PROCEDURES

In the event of a formal complaint being received the following actions will be followed:-

- a) Any member of the U3A who feels that he/she has been discriminated against must raise this immediately with a member of the committee.
- b) The committee will make a judgement on how best to proceed with investigating the complaint – depending on the seriousness of the alleged offence. This may involve appointing a committee member to investigate on its behalf, or by asking the complainant to attend a committee meeting. If the complaint is against a committee member, then that member must not be in attendance at the meeting or involved directly in the investigation. The emphasis throughout the investigation will be on listening sensitively to all those involved.

- c) If the complaint is against a particular individual, this person will have the opportunity to express his/her point of view, accompanied by a friend. The person making the complaint will also have the same opportunity.
- d) If, in the opinion of the committee, the complaint is so serious that it constitutes a criminal offence, this should be reported to the police without delay.
- e) If the complaint is against Countesthorpe U3A as an organisation the committee must work to ensure that such discrimination is eliminated and its policies and practices modified accordingly.
- f) The committee may, in extreme cases, and only after serious deliberation, feel that the only appropriate course of action is the exclusion of the offender from the organisation.
- g) Throughout any investigation or hearing, a written summary should be produced and its accuracy agreed by all those concerned.

4. COMMUNICATION

Countesthorpe U3A will inform all members that an equality and diversity policy is in operation and that they are obligated to comply with its requirements. This policy will also be drawn to the attention of relevant bodies such as funding agencies, stakeholders etc. where it is appropriate to do so.

This Equality and Diversity Policy has been formulated, and is fully supported, by the Countesthorpe U3A Management Committee. This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that equality and diversity are continually promoted throughout the membership.