



## Values and behaviours

# Equality and Diversity Policy

*The British Red Cross is committed to encouraging a dynamic and inclusive working environment, where we benefit from a variety of perspectives to make smarter decisions and better support people in crisis.*

*We have a humanitarian, ethical and legal responsibility to celebrate and champion equality and diversity. We will actively work to ensure that our organisation is inclusive and accessible to all.*

<b>Policy owner</b>	Chief People Officer
<b>Policy lead</b>	Diversity and Inclusion Manager
<b>Audience</b>	All of our people, international delegates, third-party UK providers and partners.
<b>Legislation and regulation</b>	The policy supports compliance with: <i>Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974</i> <i>Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998</i> <i>Equality Act 2010</i> <i>Human Rights Act 1998</i> <i>European Community Directives</i>
<b>Formally endorsed by</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>Endorsement date</b>	April 2018
<b>Next review</b>	July 2021

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The British Red Cross helps millions of people in the UK and around the world to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies, disasters and conflicts; and in building community resilience by supporting vulnerable groups. We aim to put people in crisis at the heart of all that we do.
- 1.2 We are committed to creating a more inclusive British Red Cross, where we benefit from a variety of perspectives and better reflect the communities we serve, to make smarter decisions and better support people in crisis.
- 1.3 We have a humanitarian, ethical and legal responsibility to champion equality, diversity and inclusion. It is only through embracing equality and diversity that we can truly embody our **Fundamental Principles** and organisational values, and create a more compassionate and courageous British Red Cross.
- 1.4 We expect all our people to be accountable for equality, diversity and inclusion at the British Red Cross. It is only by working together in **unity** that we can ensure

that everyone can perform at our best and that we can better support people in crisis.

- 1.5 This policy reflects that we see equality, diversity and inclusion are an integral part of the British Red Cross. It sets out how we will treat all volunteers, employees, contractors, people in crisis, and other stakeholders with dignity, fairness and respect. This is regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We have established a Modern Slavery Act Statement, in compliance with the *Modern Slavery Act 2015* to set out the measures we have in place to mitigate against the exploitation and discrimination of workers within our supply chain.

## 2 Policy statement

### Purpose and aims

2.1 This policy sets out our commitment to:

- > A British Red Cross that is free from discrimination and prejudice.
- > Treat all people, regardless of their background, with dignity and respect – this includes: our people, those with whom we interact (e.g. service users and customers) and other stakeholders.
- > Comply with UK equalities legislation and our other external obligations including: equality standards set by contracts, regulatory requirements, accreditations and good practice schemes.
- > Uphold the **Fundamental Principles** of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the values of the British Red Cross.
- > Make our people aware of their responsibilities, and know how and where to seek support to actively uphold and champion equality, diversity, and inclusion. See point 4, and point 7 for further details.
- > Ensure that we attract and retain people from the widest possible diversity of backgrounds and experiences to and at all levels of the organisation.
- > Actively promote our services and opportunities to a wide range of diverse communities from all backgrounds to ensure we are able to reach as many people as we reasonably can in a crisis.
- > Ensure robust diversity-related data collection to better understand our people and audiences.

### Scope

2.2 This policy applies to:

- > all our people including staff and volunteers and delegates of the British Red Cross on secondment
- > all of the British Red Cross' work in the UK and internationally; and
- > working with third-party UK providers and partners.

### 3 **Our Standards**

- 3.1 No unlawful discrimination shall occur in the support and management of our people and delivery of our services, and all decisions shall be objective and fair with individual circumstances taken into account.
- 3.2 Our services will take a person-centred approach, and diversity considerations will be incorporated into processes and delivery to ensure that all our services are accessible to all; we prevent discrimination and we protect the dignity of our service users.
- 3.3 We expect all our people will use appropriately inclusive language and behave in a way that will uphold the dignity of colleagues, service users, and stakeholders.
- 3.4 We commit to providing and supporting channels for our people to have their voices heard. This includes opportunities to network with one another, and feedback to organisational proposals. For example, the People Survey, the diversity advisory group and the diversity networks.
- 3.5 Ensure that recruitment & selection, and promotion is transparent merit-based and fair. We commit to providing recruitment and selection training, including training on equal opportunities and unconscious bias, to support these objectives. Further details are set out in our [Recruitment and Selection Policy](#).
- 3.6 Where reasonable we will make tailored adjustments to accommodate the needs of our people, including those seeking to join the British Red Cross as staff or volunteers. Further details are set out in our [Reasonable Adjustment procedure](#).
- 3.7 No premises will be purchased or leased if they don't meet our accessibility standards or cannot be adapted to do so. Where our existing buildings do not meet these standards, we will have a clear exit plan so as to be able to replace these buildings with more accessible premises within a reasonable time-frame. Further details in Disability policy.
- 3.8 Create a working environment that values difference and is free from prohibited discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment. Any individual who experiences or witnesses discrimination / harassment is encouraged to report it. All complaints will be taken seriously, promptly and thoroughly investigated, and dealt with in a sensitive and affect manner. Further details are set out in our [Harassment and Bullying, Grievance](#) and [Volunteer CIC procedures](#).
- 3.9 Delegates seconded to the Federation or the ICRC, when in the field, will be covered by the disciplinary or grievance procedures in place in those organisations, as if they were a staff member of the organisation that they are seconded at. They may also be held accountable under policies and procedures of the British Red Cross.
- 3.10 All of our written and digital communications will follow our Digital Accessibility guidelines and communication accessibility standards, and be available in alternative formats on request. In Wales, the Welsh language should not be treated less favourably than the English language.

- 3.11 The portrayal of under-represented groups within our campaigns and materials should be balanced, and not reinforce stereotypes.
- 3.12 We will maintain clear policies in place to ensure that fundraising practices do not put pressure on, or take advantage of people in vulnerable circumstances. This could include, for example, speakers of English as an additional language, older persons or disabled persons / person with disabilities.
- 3.13 Any new and reviewed policies, programmes, decisions that will affect our people or audiences will undergo an **Equality Impact Assessment**. This is to ensure that any negative impact on those with protected characteristics is mitigated wherever possible at all levels of the organisations and in all of our activities.

## 4 **Responsibilities**

- 4.1 The **Board of Trustees** are responsible for championing equality, diversity and inclusion and ensuring that the policy is consistent with the fundamental principles and that resources, support and leadership is provided to ensure this policy can be meaningfully implemented
- 4.2 The **Executive Leadership Team** are responsible for championing this policy on behalf of the Board of Trustees and ensuring compliance with policy and the effective development, implementation and monitoring of equality and diversity objectives and related action.
- 4.3 The **Chief People Officer** is the policy owner and is responsible for ensuring that this policy is fit for purpose and up to date.
- 4.4 The **Diversity and Inclusion Manager** is the policy lead and is responsible for the development, monitoring and updating of this policy. The **diversity team** are responsible for supporting the communication and implementation of this policy.
- 4.5 **Line-managers and the Leadership Team/Heads of Department** are responsible for implementing the policy and role modelling inclusive behaviour and providing support to their staff and volunteers
- 4.6 Our **people** are responsible for championing equality, diversity and inclusion, understanding how the policy relates to their role, and reporting cases of discrimination, harassment, and unfair treatment.

## 5 **Laws and regulations**

- 5.1 This policy ensures our compliance with the requirements of relevant UK legislation including the *Equality Act 2010*, *The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998*, and the **Modern Slavery Act 2015**.

## 6 **Monitoring and compliance**

- 6.1 All diversity-related staff and volunteer, service users and complaints data, will be captured and actively monitored, to ensure our policy and strategies are working effectively in practice and inform their development.
- 6.2 Diversity-related actions and targets within the corporate strategy will be monitored and reported on.

- 6.3 Procedures will be put in place to assess and monitor potential and existing partners, to confirm that their practices and behaviours are consistent with our commitment to equal opportunities.
- 6.4 Feedback and consultations will take place regularly using existing channels such as the diversity networks, diversity advisory group, staff association, youth leadership team, and volunteer representation panels.
- 6.5 We will undertake regular surveys in order to collect the views of our people, including seeking feedback from our people in relation to diversity. This survey will enable analysis by demographic.
- 6.6 Equality Impact Assessments undertaken will be centrally categorised, collated, tracked and monitored by the diversity team.
- 6.7 Any breach of this policy will be promptly investigated; breaches by staff will be a matter for disciplinary action (see [Disciplinary procedure](#)), while intentional breaches by volunteers will be dealt with by the [Volunteer CIC \(Concerns, Issues and Complaints\) procedure](#).
- 6.8 Anonymised equality and diversity monitoring information may be provided to external organisations to meet our contractual obligations or to comply with legislation (e.g. NHS's Workforce Disability / Race Equality Standards, or gender pay gap reporting requirements).

## 7 [Training and support](#)

- 7.1 All our people will have access to training through mandatory and recommended routes to assist them to translate the requirements of this policy into practice.
- 7.2 This will include an equality, diversity and inclusion e-learning module made available on our Learning Management System.
- 7.3 Equality Impact Assessment training from the Diversity team is available to all policy and project leads, and additional support can be provided on request.
- 7.4 Disability confidence awareness training will be available at all levels and training on supporting disabled staff available at line manager level and above.
- 7.5 Additional support and bespoke training is available from the diversity team and external providers.

## 8 [Review and maintenance](#)

- 8.1 The Equality and Diversity policy was refreshed and approved in April 2018. It is next due to be reviewed in July 2021.

## 9 [Appendices](#)

- 9.1 Appendix 1: definitions
- 9.2 Appendix 2: related documents
- 9.3 Appendix 3: document provenance
- 9.4 Appendix 4: Impact Assessment summaries

## Appendix 1: definitions

### What we means by Equality, diversity and inclusion

- 9.5 **Equality:** ensuring people are not treated less favourably; unjustifiably. Specifically on the basis of one or more protected characteristics<sup>1</sup> defined by the *Equality Act 2010* and other anti-discrimination legislations (see *Equality Act 2010* factsheets).
- 9.6 **Diversity:** recognising and valuing the benefits of different perspectives, backgrounds and experiences. Also, identifying and acknowledging under-representation, and taking active steps to address it through: initiatives, policies, and systemic change.
- 9.7 **Inclusion:** actively embracing people with diverse perspectives, backgrounds and experiences. And creating an environment that enables us all to feel a sense of belonging, and where we can achieve the extraordinary together.
- 9.8 Equality, diversity and inclusion are not identical, but they are reliant on one other to tackle discrimination. For example, we cannot achieve real inclusion unless we embrace equality and diversity. We often use diversity as umbrella term to describe any of our equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives.

### Unlawful discrimination

When a person or group of people is treated less favourably than another person or group of people would be treated based on their protected characteristic or \* religious or political opinion. *\*Only in Northern Ireland*

Each of the above, are grounds covered by current anti-discrimination legislation in the UK, Isle of Man and Channel Islands.

### Types of discrimination

- > Direct discrimination – treating someone unfairly because of their protected characteristic

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<sup>1</sup> The protected characteristics covered anti-discrimination laws are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Political opinion is a protected characteristic in Northern Ireland only.

- > Indirect discrimination – A practice, policy or rule applied to everyone that may at first appear fair or neutral, but puts people of a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage
- > Discrimination by association – a person is treated unfavourably because of another person’s protected characteristic
- > Discrimination by perception – when someone is treated unfairly because others believe they have a protected characteristic
- > Victimisation – a person is treated less favourably because they have or is expected to complain about discrimination
- > Harassment – unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- > Bullying – as persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behaviour, abuse of power or unfair sanctions which make the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable, which undermines their self-confidence and which may cause them to suffer stress

### **Positive action**

When an employer or organisation takes positive steps to help or encourage certain groups to participate in activity or overcome or minimise disadvantages. For example, offering leadership developing training to women when an organisation has identified that that women are under-represented in senior leadership roles.

This measure stops short of allowing preference to be given to less qualified applicants (e.g. employing or promoting an individual solely because they are from an under-represented group regardless of their suitability for the position); this is considered positive discrimination and is unlawful.

### **Occupational Requirement**

There are times when it is fair and lawful to state a preference for a person of a particular sex or a particular ethnic origin. This is when you can prove that it is essential for the purposes of the job to be of a particular sex or to come from a particular ethnic background. This is referred to as an occupational requirement.

## Equality targets

These are targets an organisation has decided to establish to ensure equality of opportunity. Equality targets are not the same as setting or establishing **quotas**. Quotas involve setting aside a number of jobs only to be filled by a particular group. This restricts the opportunity for other people to fill these positions and would therefore result in unfair or unlawful discrimination.

## Reasonable Adjustments

Under anti-discrimination legislation (e.g. *Equality Act 2010*) employers are required to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff. This means making changes to a disabled person's environment or the way their employment is structured to mitigate any disadvantages, and allows them to work safely and productively. This may include, removing physical barriers, providing extra support, and providing flexibility.

## Appendix 2: related documents

<b>Document title</b>	<b>Relationship to this policy</b>
Bullying and Harassment policy	Outlines our commitment to tackle inappropriate/offensive behaviour, intimidation, threats, discrimination, bullying or harassment.
Complaints, Issues and Concerns procedure (for volunteers)	Ensures that volunteer complaints, issues and concerns either by or about are dealt with in a consistent, fair and transparent way.
Complaints, compliments and comments policy and procedure (for service users)	Outline the process for reporting complaints, comments and compliments, to improve service delivery and ensuring safety
Disability policy	Ensures equality of opportunity for employees, volunteers and service users ensuring that no one receives less favourable treatment on the basis of their disability.
Disciplinary policy & procedure	Ensures that we operate effectively, and to promote and support the value that we place upon expected behaviours and conduct at work.
Grievance policy & procedure	Provides a mechanism for staff to raise genuine concerns about work, our conduct or other employees' actions where these affect the employee, with the aim to affect a speedy resolution to the problem or issue.

<b>Fundamental Principles</b>	As a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement the British Red Cross is committed to, and legally bound by, its fundamental principles.
<b>Flexible working procedure</b>	Outlines process for staff who want to work flexibly (e.g. part-time)
<b>Political and Other Affiliations policy</b>	Provides direction on the implementation of the Fundamental Principles, in particular Neutrality, with respect to the holding of political or other public office.
<b>Reasonable Adjustment procedure &amp; guidance</b>	Our agreed structure to manage requests for reasonable adjustments for staff.
<b>Recruitment and Selection policy &amp; procedure</b>	Includes our commitment to fair and merit-based recruitment and selection
<b>Volunteering policy</b>	The foundation on which our involvement with volunteers is based
<b>Modern Slavery corporate statement</b>	An annual requirement under the Modern Slavery Act
<b>HR Policy Framework</b>	This includes our commitment to flexible working for staff

### Appendix 3: document provenance

<b>Date endorsed</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Summarise changes made</b>	<b>Reason for changes</b>	<b>Consulted</b>	<b>Changes endorsed by</b>
June 2011	Scheduled review	Change in legislation related to Equality Act 2010	Significant legislative change		
August 2013	Scheduled review	Updated to reflect organisation change	Scheduled review	Diversity Advisor	Board of Trustees
March 2014	Scheduled review	Review in line with legislative changes	Scheduled review	Diversity Advisor	ED People and Learning
March 2016	Interim update	Updated to reflect organisation change	interim update	Diversity Advisor	ED People and Learning
July 2016	Interim Update	Move definitions to appendix, updated related documents, reduce document	Ensure the document is fit for purpose, including to meet	Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Corporate Policy	ED People and Learning

		length. Property access updated to reflect Disability policy commitment	requirements of updated policy template	Officer (Governance)	
March 2018	Scheduled review	Complete rewrite of the policy to ensure it is fit for purpose and strategically relevant	Rewrite policy in light of the Inclusion and Diversity strategy	All directorates	Board of Trustees
January 2021	Interim update	Changed the review date from April/21 to July/21; and minor updates	Review dates were changed in order to reflect the accountability model for inclusion and diversity which is due to finalize in Q2 2021	Diversity, Governance	Chief People Officer

## Appendix 4: Impact Assessment summaries

### Privacy impact assessment summary:

*Not required*

### Equality Impact Assessment summary:

*The EqIA has discovered no negative contentious issues within the policy. The policy is realistic in that not all discrimination can be limited (nor would it be desirable to eliminate) as sometimes discrimination is justifiable. For example, where the cost of making an adjustment for a disabled person is disproportionate to the desired outcome.*

### Environmental Impact Assessment summary:

*Not required*