

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of Grace Church staff.

2. CONTEXT

Grace Church recognises the value of equal opportunities and seeks, wherever possible, to follow the guidelines drawn up by the relevant statutory body.

3. PURPOSE

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

4. DEFINITIONS

Discrimination = any unlawful discrimination

Although there may be circumstances justifying different treatment, which are not unlawful (for example to comply with a genuine occupational requirement for a position), Grace Church 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

In relation to matters of religion and belief, Grace Church reserves the right to appoint staff who are loyal to the Christian ethos of the church in order to preserve its distinctiveness in accordance with the Employment Equality Regulations 2003.

Grace Church is a Christian church which seeks to operate in and for the name of Christ and those who work in the church must be in sympathy with the evangelical Christian beliefs as set out in the Basis of Faith and their promotion.

For some posts within Grace Church, more than a loyalty to the Christian ethos of Grace Church is required and these posts are recognised as having Genuine Occupational Requirements.

Grace Church recognises that the UK has a rich diversity of cultures from around the world and seeks to bring Christian witness equally to all cultures.

Accordingly, Grace Church is committed to equal opportunity, and it is its policy to treat job applicants, employees, suppliers, members and those attending the church in the same way; subject to requiring employees to adhere to Grace Church's ethos statement and staff code of conduct.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Grace Church is an equal opportunity employer. Equal opportunity is about ensuring good employment practices and efficient use of Grace Church's most valuable resources, its employees. Every Trustee and employee has personal responsibility for implementing this policy. Any instance of doubt about the application of this policy, or other questions, should be directed to the Operations Manager.

- 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 Operations Manager. Grace Church 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 customers, clients, suppliers, members and those attending or in touch with the church. Any concern related to the unequal treatment of customers, clients, suppliers, members or those attending the church should be directed to the Operations Manager.
- 6.5 DISCIPLINE
Any employee who unlawfully harasses any other employee, customer, client, supplier, member and anyone attending or in touch with the church in the course of their employment will be subject to Grace Church'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.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

This equal opportunities statement and equal opportunities policy reflect both the mission and purpose of Grace Church and the spirit and intentions of legislation which outlaws discrimination.

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

Grace Church 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 Grace Church.

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

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 an appropriate leader or the Operations Manager where appropriate.

All allegations of discrimination (including harassment) will be treated seriously. Any unlawful discrimination is totally unacceptable to Grace Church and perpetrators will face disciplinary action.