

# Equal Opportunities Policy

## Introduction

The English-Speaking Union is committed to encouraging equality and diversity amongst its employees and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our employees to be truly representative of all sections of our society and for each employee to feel respected and to be working in an environment where they are able to give their best.

The ESU is also committed to eradicating unlawful discrimination against its employees, members, volunteers, donors and beneficiaries and anyone it comes into contact with in terms of its service delivery.

The policy's purpose is to: -

- Provide equality, fairness and respect for all employees whether temporary, full time or part time.
- Not unlawfully discriminate on the grounds of the protected characteristics of; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins,) religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination in as aspects and application of our employment policies and procedures. This includes pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances or discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working arrangements and selection for employment, promotion, training or other development opportunities.

The ESU commits to: -

- Encourage equality and diversity in the workplace as they are good practice and make good business sense.
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all and where individual differences and the contribution of all employees are recognised and valued.  
This commitment includes training all managers and employees about their rights and responsibilities under the Equality Policy. Responsibilities include employees conducting themselves in a manner that ensures the ESU provides equal opportunities in employment and prevents bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. All employees should understand that they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in the course of their employment, by fellow employees, members, volunteers, beneficiaries, donors and other third parties.
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by employees, members, volunteers, beneficiaries, donors and other third parties in the course of the ESU's work and service delivery.  
Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the ESU's disciplinary procedures and action taken accordingly. Serious complaints may also constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.  
Further, some forms of harassment may amount to both an internal disciplinary matter and a criminal matter, e.g. Sexual assault.
- Make opportunities for training, development and career progression available to all employees, who will be encouraged to develop to their full potential so that their talents, skills and experience can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the ESU's service delivery.

- Review employment practices and procedures as necessary to ensure fairness and their cognisance with current employment legislation.
- Monitor the profile of the workforce regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief and disability to encourage policies that promote equality and diversity and in meeting the aims and commitments as laid out in this policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the Equal Opportunities Policy and supporting action plans are working in practice. They will be reviewed annually, and appropriate action will be taken to address any issues arising.

This Equal Opportunities Policy is endorsed and supported by the ESU senior management team.