

Glossary associated with the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy

This glossary gives definitions to some key terms used throughout this policy, it has been informed by ACAS and Equality Human Rights Commission.

Terminology	Description or example
Adverse impact	Identified where an operation has a less favourable effect on one or more groups covered by equality law than it has on other groups
Age	A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32 year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30 year olds).
Bullying	The terms bullying and harassment are often used interchangeably. In general, they can be defined as behaviours directed towards an individual that are unwelcome, unwarranted and which cause a detrimental effect.
Dependants	A dependant is a spouse or civil partner, parent, child, someone who lives in the household as part of the family, or someone who “reasonably relies” on the employee for assistance in making care arrangements if they fall ill or are injured.
Differential impact	Identified where a policy or practice affects a given group or groups in a different way to other groups. Unlike adverse impact, differential impact can be positive or negative
Direct Discrimination	Occurs where a person is treated less favourably on the grounds of being a member of a particular group than a person who is not from that group would be treated in the same or similar circumstances.
Direct Discrimination based by Association	<p>'Discrimination by association' is a type of direct discrimination. It's also known as 'associative discrimination'. It means discriminating against someone because of their connection with either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • someone who has a protected characteristic – for example a family member, friend or colleague • a group of people who have a protected characteristic <p>Discrimination by association does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership, nor pregnancy and maternity. This is because under the legislation, unlike other forms of discrimination, the legislation states there is no perceived discrimination and no discrimination by association because of marriage and civil partnership, nor pregnancy and maternity. It must be in the form of direct discrimination.</p>
Direct Discrimination based by Perception	Discrimination by perception involves unfair treatment based on mistaken assumptions about protected characteristics. It happens even if the individual does not actually possess that characteristic. This type of discrimination does not cover the

	<p>characteristic of marriage and civil partnership, nor pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>Like associative discrimination, perceptive discrimination does not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership, nor pregnancy and maternity, and it must be in the form of direct discrimination.</p>
Discrimination arising from a Disability	Occurs when a disabled person is treated unfairly due to their disability. This unfair treatment is unjustifiable. It differs from direct and indirect discrimination.
Disability	<p>A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This, also includes progressive conditions such as cancer.</p> <p>The social model of disability recognises that people are disabled by the way that society is organised and seeks to remove barriers to inclusion.</p> <p>Also refer to 'Reasonable adjustment'</p>
Diversity	Diversity is about respecting and valuing the differences between people. It is also recognising and understanding the mix of people and communities who use services and their different needs.
Equal Opportunities	Equal opportunities, or equality of opportunity, may be defined as ensuring that everyone is entitled to freedom from discrimination. There are two main types of equality encompassed in equal opportunities. The term has mostly been replaced by Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in recent years.
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	A detailed and systematic analysis of how a policy, practice, procedure or service potentially or actually has differential impact on people of different 'protected characteristics'.
Ethnicity	Ethnicity relates to a person's cultural background, national origin, common sets of ancestry, traditions, language, history, society, religion, or social treatment. Ethnicity is protected under Race under the Equality Act, 2010.
Gender	Gender refers to the social roles, behaviours, and attributes that a particular society considers appropriate for men and women. It includes both gender identity (how individuals perceive themselves) and gender expression (how they present themselves to others).
Gender Reassignment	Where a person undergoes, or proposes to undergo, a process for the purpose of reassigning their sex e.g. transgender. Non-binary and genderfluid identities are protected under this protected characteristic (refer to Taylor v Jaguar Landrover 2020)
Harassment	Unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile,

	<p>intimidating or offensive environment. The Equality Act 2010 outlines three types of harassment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related to protected characteristics • Sexual harassment • Less favourable treatment due to harassment <p>Bullying behaviour qualifies as harassment if it fits these definitions.</p> <p>For behaviour to qualify as harassment, it must either intend to or actually create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment. Whether conduct is considered harassment depends on the recipient's perception, the context of the incident, and whether it is reasonable to view the conduct as offensive</p>
Indirect Discrimination	Refers to operations that disadvantage people of different 'protected characteristics'. Indirect discrimination is illegal if it cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim
Inducing, Instructing or causing Discrimination	It is illegal to cause discrimination and you should not tell anyone to discriminate, harass, or victimise others. This applies even after relationships end, e.g. with ex-employees
Institutional Discrimination	When organisations fail to serve everyone fairly. This typically stems from their policies, procedures, and culture, leading to indirect discrimination.
Marriage and Civil partnership	Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).
Microaggression	<p>Microaggressions are brief, everyday exchanges that communicate unpleasant, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalised group membership. They can be verbal, nonverbal, or environmental. They often take the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Casual remarks/'Off the cuff' remarks • Exclusionary behaviours • Questions or comments that reveal assumptions based on stereotypes • Undermining in public • Colour "blindness" • Marginalising or erasing queer identities • Denial of individual prejudice • Questioning lived experience

Positive Action	<p>Positive action helps overcome disadvantages faced by specific groups with protected characteristics. It is legal and optional, unlike positive discrimination. Positive action can be used e.g. where</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantage: The group faces unique disadvantages. • Different Needs: They have different needs from others. • Low Participation: Their activity participation is low. <p>These actions must be based on reasonable evidence and be proportionate to their goals.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>Under the Equality Act, Pregnancy and maternity discrimination is when you're treated unfairly because you're pregnant, breastfeeding or because you've recently given birth. Maternity covers the period of 26 weeks after birth.</p> <p>Breastfeeding parents are also protected. This protection extends for the period that the parent breastfeeds (even after 26 weeks) and this would fall under Sex.</p>
Protected Characteristics	<p>Protected characteristics are personal attributes or characteristics that are safeguarded by law to ensure fair treatment and prevent discrimination. It's important to recognise that everyone possesses one or more protected characteristics, and discrimination based on any of these characteristics is prohibited by law.</p> <p>Protected characteristics include: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief (including non-belief), Sex/Gender Sexual Orientation</p>
Race	<p>A race includes individuals identified by their colour, nationality, ethnicity, or national origins. It may encompass multiple racial groups, like Black British.</p>
Reasonable Adjustment	<p>Where a disabled person is at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled, there is a duty to take reasonable steps to remove that disadvantage.</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments are changes an employer makes to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to someone's disability. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making changes to the workplace • changing someone's working arrangements • finding a different way to do something • providing equipment, services or support <p>Reasonable adjustments are specific to an individual person. They can cover any area of work. What is reasonable depends on</p>

	<p>each situation. The employer must consider carefully if the adjustment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will remove or reduce the disadvantage – the employer should talk with the person and not make assumptions • is practical to make • is affordable • could harm the health and safety of others
Religion and belief	<p>Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.</p>
Sex	<p>In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 as interpreted by the UK Supreme Court in <i>For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers</i> (2025), sex refers to a person’s biological sex. The University recognises that people may have different gender identities and expressions, and that gender identity may not align with a person’s sex. While some legislation and reporting requirements use the term “gender”, the legal protected characteristics under the Equality Act include both sex and gender reassignment. The University is committed to advancing equality of opportunity and preventing discrimination for women, men, trans, non-binary and gender-diverse people, within the framework of UK law.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex/gender, the opposite sex/gender or to more than one sex/gender.</p>
Trans	<p>Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more a wide variety of terms, including but not limited to, transgender, transsexual, gender-queer (GQ), gender-fluid, non-binary, gender-variant, crossdresser, genderless, agender, nongender, third gender, bi-gender, trans man, trans woman, trans masculine, trans feminine and neutrois.</p>
Victimisation	<p>A specific legal term under the Equality Act (2010) and specific to the workplace. It means treating someone worse for complaining about discrimination or harassment.</p> <p><i>The law says victimisation means 'suffering a detriment' because you've done or intend to do a 'protected act'.</i> <i>A 'protected act' means taking action related to discrimination law. This includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>making a complaint of discrimination or harassment</i> • <i>supporting someone else's complaint</i> • <i>gathering information that might lead to a complaint</i> • <i>acting as a witness in a complaint</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>saying something or giving evidence that does not support someone else's complaint</i> <p><i>The law also protects a person from victimisation when someone else thinks the person has done or intends to do any of the things above.</i></p> <p><i>'Detriment' means someone experiences one or both of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>being treated worse than before</i>• <i>having their situation made worse</i> <p><i>It differs from bullying.</i></p>
--	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------