

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY 2022

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## Introduction

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) among our workforce, and eliminating discrimination.<sup>1</sup>

Sandwell Council is committed to celebrating and promoting the rich and diverse backgrounds and cultures of its employees and imbedding EDI in all that it does. The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all our communities in Sandwell and for all of our employees to feel respected.

With a strategic goal to deliver a 'Fairer Sandwell', the Council established an Equalities Commission to drive the Council's ambitious EDI agenda within the Council and across the Borough, Region and National stage.

### Sandwell Equalities Commission EDI Vision

*"An open, fair and inclusive Borough that embraces and celebrates Sandwell's rich and diverse communities, cultures, and traditions; and where everyone is treated fairly and given opportunities to make the most of their talents and realise their aspirations"*

### Sandwell Equalities Commission EDI Mission

*"To promote equality and challenge discrimination and intolerances in all its forms. To break down barriers prohibiting an inclusive society by confidently tackling unfairness caused by inequality and encouraging community cohesion through increased understanding and awareness."*

## Our policy's purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time.
2. Not discriminate on the grounds of the following protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010:

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Equality Act 2010, in some limited circumstances discrimination can be justified if there is objective justification and it can be shown that this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

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- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

3. Oppose and avoid all forms of discrimination. This includes in:

- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- Trade Union activities
- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

### Our commitments

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council commits to:

1. Encourage EDI in the workplace as a matter of good practice.
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination by fellow employees, residents, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.
4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation.
5. Make decisions concerning staff recruitment and promotion based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act 2010).
6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

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7. Monitor the make-up of the workforce including age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, gender identity, and disability in encouraging EDI, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
8. Monitor Equality, Diversity and Inclusion data in disciplinaries and grievances.