

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

ACCESSIBLE SERVICES • FAIR TREATMENT • INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

Policy Owner	Board of Trustees
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Responsible Person	Centre Director

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1 Policy Statement

Unique Minds (LAMEHLAK, Charity No. 1206326) is committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity, and fostering an inclusive environment for all people who access our services, work with us, or support our mission.

We believe that every person — regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation — has the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

This commitment is not simply a legal obligation. It reflects the values at the heart of Unique Minds and is fundamental to delivering a service that is genuinely accessible to all families affected by dementia across our communities in Stourbridge, Dudley, and the wider West Midlands.

Everyone deserves equal access to support, regardless of who they are.

2 Purpose

This policy sets out Unique Minds' approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion across all of its activities. It provides a clear framework for ensuring that our services, employment practices, and organisational culture actively promote fairness and respect for all.

The policy also reflects the particular context of our work. Dementia affects people of all backgrounds, cultures, and communities. To reach and serve those who need us most — including people from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities, carers from diverse cultural backgrounds, and younger people with early onset dementia — we must ensure our services are genuinely welcoming, accessible, and relevant to everyone.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers, contractors, and anyone working on behalf of Unique Minds. It covers all areas of our work including service delivery, recruitment and employment, volunteering, communications, partnership working, and fundraising.

It applies to how we treat service users, carers, families, colleagues, partner organisations, funders, and members of the public.

4 Our Commitments

Unique Minds commits to the following in all aspects of its work:

In Service Delivery

- ✓ Ensure that all services are accessible to people regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances
- ✓ Actively reach out to underserved and marginalised communities to ensure awareness of and access to our Wayfinder service
- ✓ Provide information in accessible formats and, where possible, in community languages relevant to our local population
- ✓ Design activities, group sessions, and the physical environment of the centre to be inclusive and welcoming to all
- ✓ Take reasonable steps to meet the individual accessibility needs of service users, including those with physical disabilities, sensory impairments, or communication needs
- ✓ Treat every person who accesses our services with dignity, respect, and sensitivity to their cultural, religious, and personal values

In Employment and Volunteering

- ✓ Recruit, retain, and develop staff and volunteers fairly, based on merit and the requirements of the role
- ✓ Ensure that job descriptions, person specifications, and selection processes are free from bias and do not disadvantage any group

- ✓ Provide a working environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, or victimisation
- ✓ Support staff and volunteers to understand and embed equality and inclusion in their day-to-day practice
- ✓ Make reasonable adjustments for staff and volunteers with disabilities or health conditions

In Governance and Leadership

- ✓ Ensure that the Board of Trustees reflects, as far as possible, the diversity of the communities we serve
- ✓ Regularly review this policy and monitor its impact on service users, staff, and volunteers
- ✓ Incorporate equality considerations into all significant organisational decisions, including service design, funding bids, and partnerships

5 Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of nine protected characteristics. Unique Minds is committed to ensuring that no person is treated less favourably, directly or indirectly, because of any of these characteristics:

Protected Characteristic	Relevance to Unique Minds
Age	Dementia predominantly affects older people, but younger onset dementia affects working-age adults. We serve people across the age spectrum and must not make assumptions based on age.
Disability	Many of our service users live with dementia, which is a disability under the Equality Act. Carers may also have disabilities. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure full access to services.
Gender Reassignment	All individuals, regardless of gender identity, will be treated with dignity and respect and have equal access to services and employment opportunities.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	This characteristic applies in the context of employment. We will not treat employees differently on the basis of marital or civil partnership status.
Pregnancy and Maternity	We will support staff and volunteers through pregnancy and maternity in accordance with their legal rights and our commitment to inclusive employment.
Race	Our target communities in Dudley and Worcestershire are ethnically diverse. We are committed to reaching all communities and ensuring our services are culturally sensitive and accessible.
Religion or Belief	We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all service users, staff, and volunteers, and will accommodate these where reasonably practicable.
Sex	We will treat all individuals fairly regardless of sex. We recognise that caring responsibilities disproportionately affect women and will take this into account in our service design.
Sexual Orientation	All individuals will be treated with equal dignity and respect regardless of sexual orientation. Services and employment will be fully inclusive.

6 Accessible Services

Unique Minds recognises that accessibility is not just about physical access. True accessibility means that every person who needs our support is able to reach us, understand what we offer, and feel welcome when they engage with us.

Physical Accessibility

- ✓ The Stourbridge High Street centre has been designed and fitted out to be fully accessible – level entry, wide aisles, accessible toilets, clear signage, and a calm, dementia-friendly environment
- ✓ All outreach locations used for Wayfinder appointments or activities will be assessed for accessibility before use
- ✓ The centre layout will be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet the needs of service users with changing needs

Communication and Information

- ✓ Key information about our services will be available in plain English and, where there is identified need, in alternative formats such as large print, easy read, or community languages
- ✓ Staff will be supported to communicate effectively with people who have communication difficulties, including those in the later stages of dementia
- ✓ Our website will be designed and maintained to meet recognised accessibility standards

Cultural Sensitivity

- ✓ Staff and volunteers will receive training to develop cultural awareness and sensitivity, enabling them to provide services that are respectful of diverse backgrounds and traditions
- ✓ We will engage with faith communities, cultural organisations, and community groups in our target areas to build trust and raise awareness of our services among underserved communities
- ✓ We will listen to feedback from service users and carers from diverse backgrounds and use this to continuously improve our practice

7 Equality in Employment

Unique Minds is committed to being a fair and inclusive employer and will not discriminate in any aspect of employment on the grounds of any protected characteristic.

Types of Discrimination

We will not tolerate the following forms of discrimination in any context:

- ✓ Direct discrimination, treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic
- ✓ Indirect discrimination, applying a provision, criterion, or practice that disadvantages people with a particular protected characteristic without justification
- ✓ Harassment, unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment

- ✓ Victimisation, treating someone unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint of discrimination

Reasonable Adjustments

We will make reasonable adjustments for staff, volunteers, and service users with disabilities to ensure they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. Anyone who requires adjustments should speak to the Centre Director in the first instance.

8 Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented and that equality is embedded in the governance and strategic direction of the organisation.

Centre Director

The Centre Director is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy, ensuring staff are trained, that equality considerations inform service design and delivery, and that concerns are addressed promptly and fairly.

All Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers are expected to:

- ✓ Treat every person with dignity, respect, and fairness at all times
- ✓ Challenge discriminatory behaviour or language when they encounter it, whether from colleagues, service users, or third parties
- ✓ Report any concerns about discrimination or inequality to the Centre Director
- ✓ Participate in equality and diversity training as required

9 Reporting Concerns and Discrimination

Any person — whether a service user, carer, staff member, or volunteer — who believes they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment in connection with Unique Minds should report this as soon as possible.

Concerns can be raised informally in the first instance with the Centre Director or through the formal Complaints and Feedback Policy. All concerns will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, and handled confidentially wherever possible.

No person will be treated unfairly or victimised for raising a concern in good faith.

10 Related Legislation and Documents

This policy is underpinned by:

- ✓ Equality Act 2010

- ✓ Human Rights Act 1998
- ✓ Care Act 2014
- ✓ Mental Capacity Act 2005
- ✓ Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as superseded by the Equality Act 2010)

This policy should be read alongside:

- ✓ Safeguarding Adults Policy
- ✓ Safeguarding Children Policy
- ✓ Health & Safety Policy
- ✓ GDPR and Data Protection Policy
- ✓ Complaints and Feedback Policy

11 Feedback

Unique Minds welcomes feedback on this policy and its implementation from service users, carers, staff, volunteers, and partner organisations. Feedback can be provided through supervision, team meetings, or directly to the Centre Director and will inform future reviews and improvements.

12 Approval and Review Details

This policy will be formally reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes in legislation, guidance, or organisational practice.

Policy Name	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Organisation	Unique Minds
Policy Owner	Board of Trustees
Approved By	Board of Trustees
Date Approved	
Review Frequency	Annually or as required
Next Review Date	[Insert Date]
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