

URBAN THEOLOGY UNIT	
Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy	Issued 5 February 2009

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Introduction

The Urban Theology Unit is fully committed to promoting equality of opportunity and recognises that no employees, volunteers, members or service-users should experience discrimination on any grounds. UTU values integrity and embraces diversity as an essential component in the way we operate.

The principle of equal opportunity is supported by various legislation: Sex Discrimination Act 1975 & 1986; Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003; Equal Pay Acts 1970 & 1983; Equal Treatment Directive 1976; Disability Discrimination Act 1995; Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000; Employment Equality Regulations 2003.

This policy statement and/or the procedures for its implementation may be altered at any time by the UTU Managing Trustees. The statement and the procedures are to be reviewed in the autumn of each year by the HR Committee or other person appointed by the Trustees. A report on the review, with any proposals for amended to the statement or procedures, is to be made to the next following ordinary meeting of the Trustees.

Definitions:

- a) 'Organisation' means a responsible employing body of UTU or, where the context admits, any agent of that organisation.
- b) 'Personal status' refers to sex, colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or practice, age or religious belief.
- c) 'Discrimination' is where a person is treated less favourably than another not on the merits of the case but on grounds of 'personal status'.
- d) 'Indirect discrimination' occurs where the effect of certain requirements, conditions or practices imposed by an employer has an adverse impact disproportionately on one group or other because:
 - (i) the number of persons of the same personal status who can meet the job criteria is considerably smaller than the number who cannot.

- (ii) the criteria cannot actually be justified by the employer as a real requirement of the job.

Policy Statement

The organisation is an equal opportunities employer and will, regardless of its size or number of employees, actively seek to ensure that:

- a) in both access to employment and employment practices, all persons are afforded equal opportunity and that no employee or applicant for appointment receives less favourable treatment on grounds of their personal status, or are placed at a disadvantage by imposed conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.
- b) persons already employed will be made aware of the provisions of this policy
- c) the application of any collective agreements, recruitment, training and promotion policies will be solely on the basis of job requirements and the individual's ability and fitness for work.
- d) all persons responsible for the selection, management and promotion of employment will be given information and/or training to enable them to minimise the risk of discrimination.
- e) appropriate training will be provided to enable employees to perform their jobs effectively.
- f) any barriers to training arising from gender, marital status, age, race, disability, sexuality, sexual orientation, religion or belief will be removed.
- g) encouragement is given to all employees to take advantage of opportunities arising from training.
- h) recruitment literature shall not imply that there is a preference for a particular group of applicants, unless there is a genuine occupational qualification which limits a post to a particular group, in which case this will be clearly stated.
- i) the most effective ways will be employed to bring job vacancies to the attention of potentially disadvantaged groups.
- j) advertisements and job descriptions will give as much clear and accurate information as necessary to enable applicants to assess their suitability for the post.
- k) monitor, review and develop employment policies and procedures to ensure that they do not operate against equal opportunities.

- l) where it appears that equal opportunities are not being offered the circumstances will be investigated to detect any policies or criteria which excludes or discourages employees, and, if so, whether these policies and criteria are justifiable.
- m) appropriate action is taken where necessary to redress the effects of any policy or criteria which are found to have unjustifiably limited the provision of equal opportunities.
- n) particular care is taken to deal effectively through the grievance procedure with any complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment.

Responsibility of Individual Employees

Whilst the primary responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests mainly with UTU, individual employees at all levels also have responsibilities.

All employees have a responsibility to foster good employee relations and to follow fair employment practices. Their attitude and activities with regard to these matters are of crucial importance. In particular, individual employees should co-operate with measures introduced by UTU to ensure there is equality of opportunity and non-discrimination. An employee should not themselves discriminate; should not induce or attempt to induce other employees to discriminate and should not harass abuse or intimidate other employees on grounds of personal status.

All employees have a responsibility to treat their colleagues with dignity and respect and not to bully or harass any other member of employees and to discourage any forms of bullying and harassment in relation to a person's personal status.

Access Policy

UTU wishes to make all its services and facilities available to all who seek to take advantage of them. Regrettably, the nature of UTU's premises makes them unsuitable for wheelchair users and certain other people with mobility difficulties. UTU has spent a considerable amount of time and resources to remedy this and will continue to do so.