

EQUALITY EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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Compassion UK and Compassion Ireland (“Compassion”) reserve the right to review, amend, modify, and update its policies and procedures at any time and without prior notice to adapt to changing business needs, legal requirements, and best practice.

Please Note: Printing this document may make it obsolete.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Compassion UK and Compassion Ireland (“Compassion”) is committed to fostering a working environment and culture that embraces diversity and includes all, where everyone is treated fairly and respectfully, where everyone feels valued and has equitable access to resources, opportunities, and power to influence and make decisions, regardless of their differences.

Compassion’s mission is embodied in the phrase: ‘Releasing children from poverty in Jesus’ name’. We believe God created us in unique ways and want to celebrate this and harness it for our mission.

Compassion’s desire is to have a workforce that experiences a deep sense of belonging, creating an inclusive environment where everyone is comfortable expressing and being themselves, where every single person knows their differences are valued and indeed required to accomplish Compassion’s mission, and where they can perform their career best work, regardless of background, identity or circumstances. An environment where everyone feels a valued part of the whole.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out Compassion’s approach to promoting a working environment free from discrimination.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees and associated personnel.

This policy is intended to cover issues which reflect both the organisation’s cultural attributes, and the spirit and intentions of legislation which outlaws discrimination on any of the following:

- **Protected Characteristics** (applicable to Compassion UK)

Ensuring no individual receives less favourable treatment that is unlawful on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, race (*including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin*), religion, or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and pregnancy and maternity.

- **Nine Grounds** (applicable to Compassion Ireland)

Ensuring no individual receives less favourable treatment that is unlawful on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race (*including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin*), religious belief and membership of the traveller community.

Compassion has separate policies which cover:

- the legal basis for certain roles to have an occupational requirement for the post-holder to demonstrate an active personal commitment to the Christian faith. (‘Policy on Posts to be held by Christians’)
- issues involving discrimination including victimisation, harassment (including sexual harassment) and bullying (‘Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure’)

This is a shared policy that covers Compassion UK and Compassion Ireland under the same policy. Where relevant and applicable, some aspects of the policy may be customised to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations for each entity.

In the event of any conflict or inconsistencies between the policy and applicable legislation for each entity, the legislation will always take precedence.

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4. STANDARDS

- 4.1. All employees and associated personnel are expected to:
 - 4.1.1. have clear knowledge and understanding of this policy;
 - 4.1.2. ensure their own actions and behaviours are fair and respect the dignity of others;
 - 4.1.3. eliminate discrimination by ensuring the practical application of this policy; and
 - 4.1.4. report incidents of discrimination to an appropriate senior manager, such as the Director of People and Culture.
- 4.2. Compassion will ensure this policy is updated in line with and guided by relevant legislation and codes of practice.

4.3. Culture

Compassion commits to:

- 4.3.1. maintaining a positive culture throughout Compassion, where equality, equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging, and respect are at the heart of all our activities.
- 4.3.2. using positive action (see definition in section 6) to encourage those who are under-represented to overcome disadvantage.
- 4.3.3. ensuring the highest possible standards are achieved in our employment practices.

4.4. Recruitment and Selection

Compassion commits to:

- 4.4.1. recognising that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and skills and in so doing, build and reinforce a culture that welcomes interest from all sections of the community.
- 4.4.2. ensuring that people with disabilities people (see definition in section 6) are given equal opportunity to enter employment or to become trustees or volunteers. In so doing, Compassion will fully consider making reasonable adjustments to operating practices, equipment, and premises to ensure that people with disabilities are not put at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability. Compassion recognises the skills and expertise people with disabilities hold and the richness of experience they bring to our work and culture and as such are committed to making reasonable adjustments to encourage full participation.
- 4.4.3. ensuring that entry to employment, or the equivalent for trustees and volunteers within Compassion, will be determined by personal merit and ability relevant to the role.
- 4.4.4. making all employees aware of opportunities for promotions or other roles and encourage application for such roles as they become available. Decisions will be determined on criteria relevant to the objectives of the role, personal merit, and ability relevant to the purposes of Compassion.
- 4.4.5. not excluding household members, close relatives, or other connected parties of employees to work or become board members or volunteers. Nevertheless, nepotism will not be allowed, and processes will encourage transparency and be managed openly and properly.

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4.5. Occupational Requirement

Compassion commits to:

- 4.5.1. creating an environment which promotes the organisation's Christian ethos and enables people to experience, explore and express the faith-based motivation of Compassion's work. Compassion has a separate 'Policy on Posts to be held by Christians' which sets out how roles are assessed to be promoting the organisation's Christian ethos and are required to demonstrate an active personal commitment to the Christian faith; be in agreement with and committed to respect and uphold and commit to work within Compassion's Christian faith-based ethos, faith statements and values. Compassion welcomes people of all faiths and none for all other roles which are expected to respect, uphold, and commit to work within Compassion's Christian faith-based ethos, faith statements and values.

Learning and Development

Compassion is committed to:

- 4.5.2. providing information and training to all employees, trustees, and (as relevant) volunteers to ensure that they are fully aware of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion issues and their responsibilities related to these areas.
- 4.5.3. making opportunities for training, development, and progression available to all employees, who will be supported and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised in the fulfilment of Compassion's charitable purposes.

4.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

Compassion is committed to:

- 4.6.1. Monitoring the composition of its workforce including trustees, and those applying to fill vacancies, to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and identify areas for improvement.

4.7. Conditions of Employment

Compassion is committed to:

- 4.7.1. offering all employees the same terms of employment i.e., the same working conditions; and the same treatment, and disciplinary measures, etc.
- 4.7.2. making every effort through reasonable adjustment, retraining or redeployment as appropriate to accommodate the needs of someone who becomes disabled in the course of their employment to enable them to remain in the service of Compassion.

4.8. Complaints and Redress

Compassion is committed to:

- 4.8.1. treating all allegations of discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying seriously. Any discrimination is totally unacceptable to Compassion, and anyone found to be discriminating would face disciplinary action, in accordance with Compassion's 'Disciplinary Policy and Procedure' and all practicable steps will be taken to prevent the behaviour continuing. Any person who wishes to raise issues concerning alleged discrimination or unfairness should report to the appropriate senior person, such as the Director of People and Culture. Compassion also has a separate 'Whistleblowing-Protected Disclosures Policy and Procedure' which sets out the whistleblowing channels and response procedures.

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5. ASSOCIATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following policies and procedures are linked, connected, co-related or relevant to this policy.

- Code of Conduct
- Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Ethos Statement
- Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Policy on Posts to be held by Christians
- Policy on Engaging People with a Criminal Record (UK only)
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Whistleblowing-Protected Disclosures Policy

6. DEFINITIONS

Associated Personnel	Refers to casual workers, apprentices, volunteers, trustees, ambassadors, independent contractors, third party organisations, suppliers working on Compassion’s behalf, programme visitors including supporters, journalists, celebrities, and politicians, and members of the public.
Bullying	<p>Usually seen as unwanted acts or verbal comments that could psychologically or ‘mentally’; hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact. Bullying often, but not always, involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour intended to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate a particular person or group of people. Bullying includes “Cyberbullying” and “Emotional and Psychological Abuse in religious contexts” as defined below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that uses electronic communication such as email, texting, virtual meetings, social media and more. The messages or comments often, but not always, intend to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate. Sometimes the harasser is known. Other times they are anonymous. • Emotional and Psychological Abuse in religious contexts is a form of bullying based on religion, faith, or beliefs. This includes incidents where a person intimidates, humiliates, or tries to coerce others because of differences in their religion, faith, or beliefs. It also includes incidents where an individual uses their religion, faith, or beliefs as a means to or justification for bullying others, regardless of intent.
People with Disabilities	<p>In the UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • someone is considered to have a disability if they have a physical, or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out their normal day to day activities. • people with certain conditions are automatically protected under disability discrimination law namely cancer, an HIV infection, multiple sclerosis, a visual impairment. <p>In the Republic of Ireland disabilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • total or partial absence of a person’s bodily or mental functions, including the absence of a part of a person’s body; • the presence in the body of organisms causing, or likely to cause, chronic disease or illness; • the malfunction, malformation, or disfigurement of a part of a person’s body;

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a condition or malfunction which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition or malfunction; or • a condition, disease or illness which affects a person’s thought processes, perception of reality, emotions, or judgement or which results in disturbed behaviour; • and shall be taken to include a disability which exists at present, or which previously existed but no longer exists, or which may exist in the future, or which is imputed to a person.
Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Discrimination consists of treating a person less favourably than another would be treated in similar circumstances because of a protected characteristic/nine grounds they have. • Indirect Discrimination occurs when a policy, rule, process, or procedure applies to everyone but has a disproportionate impact on people with a protected characteristic/nine grounds which cannot be justified. It is usually less obvious than direct discrimination and can often be unintentional. • Associative Discrimination consists of treating a person less favourably than another because they are associated with a person who has a protected characteristic/nine grounds. • Perceptive Discrimination consists of treating a person less favourably than another because others think they have a particular protected characteristic/nine grounds even when they may not actually have that characteristic.
Diversity	Is about understanding that everyone is unique. It recognises, respects, and celebrates the added value that differences bring. Compassion aims to harness these differences and create an environment where everyone knows their differences are valued and indeed required to accomplish Compassion’s mission. Where everyone feels a valued part of the whole and are enabled to reach their full potential.
Equality	The development of practices that eliminate unlawful and unfair discrimination and promote fair and equal opportunity for all.
Equity	<p>Recognises that people, whilst similar in many ways, are also different. Such differences include gender, age, race / ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion and belief, education, economic status, personality, communication style and approaches to how people think and work, amongst other things. These differences can significantly impact access to equality.</p> <p>Equity is not about treating everyone in the same way, as it recognises that people’s needs are met in different ways. This involves acknowledging and trying to redress imbalances through differentiated means as necessary and appropriate.</p>
Harassment	<p>A form of discrimination that occurs when bullying or unwanted behaviour is related to the protected characteristics/nine grounds, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.</p> <p>Harassment may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display, or circulation of written words, pictures, or other material.</p>

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Inclusion	It is about making people feel welcome and accepted, especially those who are socially excluded, marginalised, or under-represented. It is about encouraging participation so that everyone feels valued, respected, and engaged. It involves taking action to remove barriers to participation and enabling a diverse range of people to work together effectively.
Nepotism	The inappropriate hiring or promotion of household members, close relatives or other connected parties of existing employees, board members, or volunteers
Positive Action	These are the steps that Compassion can take to encourage people from groups with different needs or from disadvantaged backgrounds to apply for roles at Compassion and encourage full participation in its ministry by minimising that disadvantage.
Sexual harassment	<p>Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person's employment.</p> <p>The unwanted behaviour must have either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • violated the person's dignity, whether it was intended or not; or • created a hostile environment for the person, whether it was intended or not. • The protection extends to where the employee is treated differently in the workplace because they have rejected or tolerated the sexual harassment or harassment, for example in relation to decisions concerning access to training, promotion or salary
Victimisation	Occurs when someone is treated unfairly because they made or supported a complaint to do with a protected characteristic/nine grounds, or someone thinks they did or might do.

7. POLICY APPROVAL AND REVISION HISTORY

Review Frequency: This policy will be reviewed and approved every three (3) years.

Version Number	Approval Date	Changes Made
V1.0	01 August 2008	
V2.0	12 October 2015	
V3.0	30 November 2018	
V4.0	28 October 2022	<p>The policy has been renamed from the previous 'Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy'. It now clearly reflects the organisation's commitments. New additions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • going beyond legal minimum and including those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds; • demonstrating alignment with Compassion's cultural attributes; • distinguishing 'equality' and 'equity'; and • monitoring and evaluating the composition of the workforce.
V5.0	10 November 2023	New single policy document that covers Compassion UK and Compassion Ireland under the same policy.