



**Volunteer
Police
Cadets**

National Volunteer Police Cadets

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Policy



Policy Statement

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

The Volunteer Police Cadets is committed to encouraging and promoting diversity and inclusion in our workplace and services to members, both adults and young people. This reflects the values and ethics of British Policing of courage, respect and empathy and public service, where everyone should be treated with dignity at all times.

The National VPC and their member police forces will take every possible step to tackle all forms of discrimination, inequality, and unfair treatment, whether it's intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect. The National VPC is committed to making sure that all employees and volunteers have equal access to opportunities and to removing all barriers to inclusion in the workplace.



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1. Purpose and Aims of the Policy

To set out VPCs clear commitment to creating a diverse, inclusive workplace and demonstrating good practice, going beyond legal requirements on equality, diversity and inclusion

- To provide the legal framework and definitions surrounding equality, diversity and inclusion; the protected characteristics; and forms of discrimination
- To provide clear guidance for staff and volunteers on expected behaviours and responsibilities as employees of a diverse and inclusive workplace
- To set out a fair and inclusive approach to the recruitment, selection, and professional development of employees and volunteers
- To make sure that equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in all of the organisation's practices and processes
- To explain the possible effects of any breach of the policy All employees, consultants, volunteers and agency workers who work or volunteer on behalf of their Police Force whilst delivering the VPC are expected to follow the principles of this policy.

Equality

Equality is about making sure that every individual has equal opportunities to make the most of their lives, whatever their identity or background. Equality isn't about treating everyone in the same way; it recognises that creating equal opportunities and outcomes for everyone may require different approaches for different individuals or groups.

Diversity

Diversity means valuing all differences between people, whether they're visible or not. It includes recognising different viewpoints, experiences, and identities as organisational strengths. Diversity isn't about 'accepting' or 'managing' differences; it's about nurturing and celebrating them so everyone can contribute fully and realise their full potential.

Inclusion

Inclusion means taking proactive, positive actions to remove any and all barriers to participation in the workplace to create an environment where every member feels equally valued and supported to thrive. Being an inclusive organisation requires an ongoing commitment to listening, understanding, and taking action

2. Legal Framework

Current equality legislation and associated codes of practice to be taken into account include (but aren't limited to):

- Equality Act 2010
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Part-Time Workers Regulations 2000
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Equal Pay Act 1970

- Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000 (as amended).
- Gender Recognition Act 2004

This legislation protects people against all forms of discrimination based on particular protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are certain attributes that people possess, which the law considers must be safeguarded.

There are nine protected characteristics that it is unlawful to discriminate based on: sex, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital or civil partnership status, and gender reassignment. See Appendix A for legal definitions of these terms. We will take steps to make sure everyone feels included

3. Types of Discrimination

Direct discrimination

This is where a person is treated less favourably than someone else because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ someone because they were pregnant.

Discrimination by association

This is direct discrimination against someone because they're associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic, for example, against people who are carers for disabled people.

Discrimination by perception

This is direct discrimination against someone because the other person thinks they possess a particular protected characteristic, for example, against a straight woman who's perceived to be gay.

Harassment

This is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. Even if the effect wasn't intended by the person responsible for the conduct, it's still harassment. Employees can now report behaviour they find offensive even if it's not directed at them.

Victimisation

This is where someone is treated less favourably than others because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance or have given evidence in relation to a complaint.

Bullying

This is behaviour that's offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting, or an abuse of power and is intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure. Bullying can include (but isn't limited to) racist, sexist and homophobic language or abuse.

VPC and associate police forces will do everything it can to make sure that people are treated fairly and equally across all protected characteristics and at all levels of the organisation by:

- Preventing, tackling, and addressing seriously all instances of discrimination and language that's inappropriate, offensive or insensitive
- Challenging assumptions and stereotypes across all protected characteristics
- Making sure that employees and volunteers from diverse backgrounds have equal access to progression, promotion, reward, and recognition
- Supporting all employees and volunteers to balance their life at work and at home
- Making workspaces accessible and co-developing effective reasonable adjustments with disabled employees and volunteers and those with temporary health needs or conditions (for example, employees who are pregnant) so that all employees can reach their full potential
- Visibly promoting and championing the benefits of a diverse workforce
- Making sure that employees' contractual requirements and employee benefits don't disadvantage or exclude certain individuals or groups
- Valuing and respecting the different perspectives and viewpoints of all employees and volunteers
- Focusing on employees and volunteers' abilities and strengths and avoiding any assumptions about ability based on a person's identity or background.

4. Responsibilities

The National VPC are responsible for promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion and monitoring how this policy is put into effect within forces through the Safe to Operate Standards.

The Police Force is responsible for adopting this or creating their own policy on behalf of their force VPC scheme and they should lead their VPC units and teams in a way that is consistent with the policy. They will also work to make sure that all staff who report to them understand what is needed to meet the requirements of their policy.

HR and diversity team members are responsible for developing, updating, communicating, and implementing local force policy.

All staff members, volunteers and cadets are expected to become familiar with this policy and make sure that their behaviour and practice reflect its ethos.

5. Actions

Employees and volunteers involved with VPC will –

Fully adopt and embrace this policy's ethos of equality, diversity, and inclusion at all times

- Respect and value the diversity and diverse perspectives of others
- Not discriminate, bully, harass or victimise anyone
- Act as role models for equality, diversity, and inclusion. Where needed, explain this policy and what it means for other employees or volunteers
- Report all forms of discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation and challenge them where appropriate
- Attend training to make sure they're following best practice in equality, diversity, and inclusion in their work and workplace behaviours
- Assist their force or National VPC in any related investigations and provide accurate, unbiased information

Cadet Coordinators and Line managers will -

- Set a positive example for team members by making sure that their own actions and behaviours promote equality, diversity, and inclusion
- Follow best practice during recruitment to ensure shortlisting, selection, interview, and appointments processes don't discriminate
- Adopt any local force positive action policy
- Make sure that appraisal processes include equality, diversity and inclusion targets, learning and behaviours as appropriate
- Identify and proactively seek to address equality, diversity, and inclusion awareness or training needs for their teams and direct reports

As a guiding body National VPC will –

Create a culture where equality, diversity, and inclusion are valued and dignity and respect are promoted across the whole organisation; supported by tangible actions and guidance, training, and awareness raising for all

- Take steps to prevent and challenge all forms of discrimination and inappropriate behaviour and language, and refer to the appropriate local force disciplinary channels where necessary
- Operate an open and fair recruitment and selection process that encourages applications from all areas of our diverse society, taking positive action as appropriate
- Make sure that selection for employment is solely on the basis of aptitude and ability.
- Make sure that professional development opportunities are open to all and apply positive action as appropriate
- Support all involved with VPC to recognise and challenge unlawful practice
- Regularly review relevant policies and procedures and the Safe to Operate Standards to make sure that they're in line with best practice and legal requirements on equality, diversity, and inclusion

6. Training and Support

As part of the Safe to Operate Standards all cadet leaders are required to receive force equality, diversity, and inclusion training. Where available the National VPC will look to provide additional training or further guidance and support.

7. Diversity Monitoring

Diversity monitoring is an essential process for police forces and for National VPC. It means we can identify patterns and highlight any areas of concern. Diversity information provided by applicants and employees for monitoring purposes is kept confidential and in line with the Data Protection Act 2018. Police forces may use appropriate methods, including lawful positive action, to address the under-representation of any group.

8. Breach of Policy

All complaints of discrimination will be sensitively investigated by the local force. If they're proven, they will result in appropriate action for the perpetrator. Any employee found to be in breach of their policy could be subject to disciplinary action locally and/or their continued engagement with VPC will be reconsidered.

9. Review of Policy

National VPC will regularly review this policy to make sure that it's up-to-date and in line with the law and the development of National VPC.

10. Appendices: Appendix A

Legal definitions of protected characteristics as defined in The Equality Act 2010.

Age

A person belonging to a particular age (for example, 32-year-olds) or range of ages (for example, 18- to 30-year-olds).

Disability

A person who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, adverse and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

Refers to a person who has undergone, intends to undergo or is currently undergoing a transition from the sex they were assigned at birth to their self-identified gender. This includes people who undergo medical treatment as well as people who take 'social' steps such as changing their name, pronoun or appearance to live as their self-identified gender. Please be aware that gender reassignment is a contentious term, not commonly used outside of The Equality Act.

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage is a legal union between two people of any sex or gender. Same-sex couples can also have relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context.

Race

A person or group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality (including citizenship) or ethnic origins, which may be different to a person's current nationality.

Religion and belief

Refers to any religion and 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 to be included in the definition.

Sex

Assigned to a person at birth (male or female) on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions.

Sexual orientation

A person's sexual attraction or lack thereof, to other people of the same or different genders.



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