



POLICY

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Policy Name | Inclusion and Diversity Policy |
| • Date of Publication | August 2024 |
| • Superseded Policy | November 2022 |
| • Review Date | August 2026 |
| • Senior Responsible Officer | Head of HR |

BITC Inclusion and Diversity Policy

The purpose of this policy

Business in the Community respects all individuals and will not unlawfully or unfairly discriminate on grounds of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

Age, disability, gender identity or reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, nor on grounds of any other irrelevant distinction.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination and or harassment against our employees whether that's internally or external source eg suppliers' customers and members and we will investigate thoroughly any issue raised by our colleagues.

Business and the Community opposes and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. Our overall approach to inclusion is out in the inclusion approach document as to how we grow and embed a truly inclusive culture.

This policy provides the specifics for what BITC does and how we behave collectively and individually in relation to our governance, employment practices and ways of working to protect our colleagues from and avoid any unlawful discrimination and adopt positive practices and behaviours to embed an inclusive culture.

For example this includes (not an exhaustive list)

pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment dealing with grievances and discipline,



dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, selection for employment, promotion, training or other development opportunities.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees (colleagues) based in the UK. as all our colleagues are responsible for the promotion and advancement of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

We do also expect any secondees, agency workers, volunteers, or contractors to abide by the principles of this policy.

Everyone who works for or is in some way involved with the organisation, should be treated with dignity and respect, and is not subjected to any form of discrimination, harassment, or non-inclusive behaviours.

Any policy breach by or concerns raised by a secondee agency worker or contractor regarding their own treatment in relation to their interactions with BITC must be dealt with in accordance with their own employer's policy.

This policy may be subject to change at the discretion of management and in consultation with our recognised Union, Community, where fundamental changes are required.

Our overall goal

We seek to have an inclusive culture built on respect and trust where all colleagues should feel they are having a great experience at every step of their colleague journey.

We believe that embracing inclusivity will create a sense of belonging, where every individual feels valued, appreciated, and respected, where all colleagues are treated fairly and have the opportunity to reach their potential grow, thrive and be their best.

We aim to be a true reflection of the communities in which we operate both in terms of the services we provide and the people we employ.

We will build a culture that values objectivity, openness, fairness, and transparency; recognises the implications of privilege; and hears the impact of lived experiences.

Business in the Community is committed to the following principles:

Creating a workplace where everyone feels included, has a voice, is valued and can be themselves.



Providing visible leadership regarding equality, diversity, and inclusion, encompassing role modelling, ownership, accountability, and sponsorship by all.

Ensuring everyone who works for or is in some way involved with the organisation, should be treated with dignity and respect, and is not subjected to any form of discrimination, harassment, or non-inclusive behaviours.

Ensuring all our leaders and managers role model our values that underpin the way we work and take the lead to call out and support colleagues where any discrimination or harassment is observed.

Seek to ensure the presence of diverse voices in our decision making, through regular engagement with our colleagues, our networks and our union representatives

Giving diverse colleagues a voice , regularly seeking feedback to understand lived experiences and ensure that any issues are addressed .

Demonstrating commitment to inclusion and diversity by adopting the best practice (taking into account our size and resource capacity) recommended by our internal Workplace campaigns e.g., Gender, Race and Wellbeing

Integrating inclusion & diversity into all our policies process and practices e.g induction and learning and development, seeking to prevent both conscious and unconscious bias.

We also recognise that racism exists institutionally, meaning in the workplace it can present in different and varied ways, presenting in workplace policies and processes. We will work with our union representatives and ethnically diverse colleagues and our networks to actively identify, challenge, prevent, eliminate and change the structures, policies, programmes, practices and behaviours that perpetuate racism.

Demonstrating conscious inclusion in all we do, our products, services and offers.

Ensuring fairness and opportunity for all with a transparent approach to recruitment and selection, promoting agile and flexible working.

Ensuring that our business communications are inclusive and reinforce the inclusive messages as part of the everyday way we do business.

Ensure our colleagues are protected from discriminatory behaviour and actions from external suppliers' customers including members.

Address any concerns raised by colleagues in their dealings with external individuals and organisations in a timely and appropriate way, supporting the wellbeing of our colleagues at all times

Making sure our conduct does not cause offence or misunderstanding and if we accidentally cause offence, take ownership for mistakes, apologise, and learn from them.



Serious breaches of our policy and any other inclusion specific policies eg our anti-racist policy and trans inclusion policy will be dealt with in line with Business in the Community's Disciplinary and respect at work Policy,

Inclusive behaviours by everyone:

- We expect all our colleagues to live and embed our values but some specific examples of good inclusive behaviours (not exhaustive)- we wish to encourage are below:
- Taking time to actively listen and understand, showing tolerance in dealings with others and giving feedback where appropriate so we can learn and grow.
- Ask open ended questions to understand and underlying issues rather than making assumptions.
- Showing attentive active listening to everyone so individuals can feel understood.
- Be open to constructive feedback and dialogue actively seek improvements seeking different points of views and embrace diverse perspectives.
- Line manager and colleagues work together to agree any adjustments to ways of working that will support our diverse workforce.
- Acknowledge and appreciate everyone's contributions and efforts.
- Pause and reflect if you have a strong reaction to someone and avoid defensiveness or anger when challenged

Actions we will take to promote and advance inclusivity and diversity.

Ensure we undertake regular upskilling and learning sessions with colleagues and line managers on all areas of inclusion and diversity and improving understanding of how to embed inclusive behaviours.

- Capturing, analysing, and reporting diversity monitoring data, and using this to inform targeted action.
- Calculating gender, and ethnicity pay gaps and publishing these.
- Taking seriously and appropriate action on complaints of discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying and adopting a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of harassment and bullying
- Colleagues playing their part by not being afraid to make a stand for themselves or for a colleague. Be prepared to take appropriate action if you observe or have evidence that someone else is being discriminated against or harassed.

- Co-operating with any formal investigation as a witness if requested.

Examples of discriminatory behaviours that we will not tolerate

The examples detailed below are across some of the protected characteristics but are not exhaustive.

- Not making reasonable adjustments for a colleague with a disability
- Unfair treatment of a colleague not promoting or developing them due to their age
- Using inappropriate or derogatory colloquialisms or other language to refer to someone of a certain race, nicknames, [innuendos](#), insults, abusive or inappropriate language, degrading banter, or offensive terminology.
- Acting with hostility or demonstrating negative feelings towards someone because they are of a particular religion for example being anti sematic or Islamophobic.
- Derogatory stereotyping, e.g., attributing the same characteristics regardless of individual differences.
- Harassing or mistreating someone based on their sexual orientation, gender reassignment or gender critical beliefs.
- Breaches of the confidentiality of their sexual orientation “outing ”
- Unwanted sexual advances comments or behaviour that create a hostile environment.
- Ignoring, isolating, or not cooperating with, or excluding colleagues because of their protected characteristics.
- Preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities, failing to hire, train, mentor or promote someone because of their characteristic.
- Subjecting someone to excessive performance monitoring or overly criticising them in person or in front of others because of their characteristic
- Other examples of ongoing microaggressions: everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target individuals based solely upon their protected characteristics

Leaders and managers responsibilities

The detailed specific responsibilities of our senior leaders and managers are set out in inclusion approach. However to summarise:

- Our senior leaders are responsible and accountable for creating and maintain an open and accountable culture.

- All our line managers and leaders must abide by and work within our current policy framework.
- All managers must role model inclusive behaviours and take initiative and be proactive in maintaining a safe and inclusive team environment and effectively support any team members who may experience inappropriate behaviours, bullying or harassment at work.

What happens if our Policy is breached.

Dealing with Issues:

- We encourage informal resolution of issues however all colleagues have the right to raise a concern via the grievance policy in some cases, particularly with micro behaviours or micro aggressions, it may be possible to solve matters informally.
- colleagues could raise these directly through a face-to-face meeting or by another form of communication such as e-mail or letter.
- Sometimes people are not aware that their behaviour or actions are not inclusive or potentially discriminatory or harassment, and an informal discussion can lead to greater understanding and an agreement that the behaviour or discrimination will cease immediately.
- Wherever possible we will look to address inappropriate actions and behaviours through education and training to support colleagues behave in an inclusive and appropriate way going forward.

Formal Grievances

- Where the discrimination or harassment is of a serious nature, e.g. taking into account the intent, impact, and frequency of the alleged offence and following the informal route has not resolved the issues, or is not appropriate, the colleague should follow the BITC Grievance Policy.
- If BITC becomes aware of a serious issue it may decide to conduct a formal investigation in even in the absence of a formal complaint by a colleague. The colleague will be notified and supported.

After the Grievance Decision

- If after an investigation a complaint of discrimination or harassment is upheld in whole or in part, this will be treated as a potential disciplinary offence, which may result in disciplinary action or dismissal from employment.

Dealing with external issues



- We have a duty of care to our colleagues to ensure protect our colleagues from any discriminatory actions and behaviours from any external suppliers and customers who BITC has dealing with.
- All colleagues should ideally raise in the first instance with their line manager any concerns or issues they have experienced in their dealings with external organisations and individuals working with BITC that may be discriminatory.
- Colleagues may also use the speak up (whistleblowing) and grievance policy.
- Colleagues should be aware that the grievance policy would only be an appropriate way to raise issues where there is an allegation that suggests BITC has breached its responsibility for duty of care to that colleague and BITC should have taken action to prevent any alleged discrimination. A thorough investigation will be undertaken whether this is raised informally or formally and BITC may also choose to carry out an investigation without an informal or formal complaint from a colleague if we believe there are potential discriminatory and or harassing actions or behaviours by any external body or individual BITC deals with any actions concerning appropriate outcomes against any individual would have to be dealt with by that organisation own policies. If discriminatory behaviours or actions have been found to take place BITC would consider whether it is appropriate to continue that relationship with that organisation and or individual.
- Regardless of the outcome of any concerns raised BITC will look to support the colleague's wellbeing at all times.

Other relevant documents and policies

- Employees who wish to raise a grievance in connection with this policy should refer to the Grievance Policy our Respect at Work policy which deals specifically with Harassment and Bullying (including sexual harassment) and our Anti Racist policy.

Further Support

Our confidential EAP provider is always available for colleagues

Call: **0800 028 0199** and tell them you work for Business in the Community.

Or Download and register - Wisdom app

- Get it on the App store or Play store
- Sign up via email



- Enter the code - MHA214800
- Enter your details
- Personalise preferences
- Welcome to Wisdom!
- Or visit the website - [Wisdom \(healthassured.org\)](https://wisdom.healthassured.org)

Community Members

Contact Community on **0800 389 6332** or servicecentre@community-tu.org