

# St Edmundsbury Cathedral



## Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

### Introduction

The Chapter of St Edmundsbury Cathedral (“Chapter”) is committed to achieving a working environment which provides equality of opportunity and freedom from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation (known as the **protected characteristics**). Chapter is committed to actively opposing all forms of discrimination.

Chapter is also committed to ensuring that St Edmundsbury Cathedral as an organisation does not discriminate against its visitors or, in the case of the Cathedral Shop and Pilgrims’ Kitchen, its customers, in the means by which they can access the Cathedral site and facilities. Chapter believes that all employees, volunteers and visitors are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity.

Any and all personal data used in connection with this policy shall be collected, held and processed in accordance with Chapter’s Data Protection Policy.

### Aims of the Policy

To prevent, reduce and stop all forms of unlawful discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010.

To ensure that recruitment, promotion, training, development, assessment, benefits, pay, terms and conditions of employment, redundancy and dismissals are determined on the basis of capability, qualifications, experience, skills and productivity.

### Designated Officer

*Name:* Sarah-Jane Allison

*Position:* Chief Operating Officer

*Tel.:* 01284 748720

*Email:* sarah-janeallison@stedscathedral.org

Line Managers will also ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination.

### Definition of Discrimination

Discrimination is unequal or differential treatment which leads to one person being treated more or less favourably than others are, or would be, treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation. Discrimination may be direct or indirect, and includes **discrimination by perception and association**.

## **Direct Discrimination**

This occurs when a person or a policy intentionally treats a person less favourably than another on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics as listed above.

## **Indirect Discrimination**

This is the application of a policy, criterion or practice which the employer applies to all employees but which is such that:

- It is detrimental to a considerably larger proportion of people from the group that the person the employer is applying it to represents;
- The employer cannot justify the need for the application of the policy on a neutral basis; and
- The person to whom the employer is applying it suffers detriment from the application of the policy.
- Example: A requirement that all employees must be 6ft tall if that requirement is not justified by the position would indirectly discriminate against employees with an oriental ethnic origin, as they are less likely to be able to fulfil this requirement.

## **Harassment**

This occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

## **Victimisation**

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have brought or intend to bring proceedings or they have given or intend to give evidence.

## **Unlawful Reasons for Discrimination**

### *Sex*

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the grounds of sex, marital status, civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment or transgender status. This applies to men, women and those undergoing or intending to undergo gender reassignment. Sexual harassment of men and women can be found to constitute sex discrimination.

Example: Asking a woman during an interview if she is planning to have any (more) children constitutes discrimination on the ground of gender.

### *Age*

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their age. This applies to people of all ages. This does not currently apply to the calculation of redundancy payments.

### *Disability*

It is not permissible to treat a disabled person less favourably than a non-disabled person. Reasonable adjustments must be made to give the disabled person as much access to any services and ability to be employed, trained, or promoted as a non-disabled person.

### *Race*

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their race, the colour of their skin, their nationality or their ethnic origin.

### *Sexual Orientation*

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their sexual orientation. For example, an employer cannot refuse to employ a person because s/he is homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual.

### *Religion or Belief*

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their religious beliefs or their religion or their lack of any religion or belief.

## **Positive Action in Recruitment**

Under the Equality Act 2010, positive action in recruitment and promotion applies as of 6 April 2011. 'Positive action' means the steps that the Chapter can take to encourage people from groups with different needs or with a past record of disadvantage or low participation, to apply for positions within the Cathedral.

If Chapter chooses to utilise positive action in recruitment, this will not be used to treat people with a protected characteristic more favourably, it will be used only in tie-break situations, when there are two candidates of equal merit applying for the same position.

## **Reasonable Adjustments**

For the purpose of this policy, disabilities are either physical or mental impairments that have a substantial and long-term (but not necessarily permanent) effect upon a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Chapter has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the employment of a disabled person. These may include:

Making adjustments to premises;

Re-allocating some or all of a disabled employee's duties;

Transferring a disabled employee to a role better suited to their disability;

Relocating a disabled employee to a more suitable office;

Giving a disabled employee time off work for medical treatment or rehabilitation;

Providing training or mentoring for a disabled employee;

Supplying or modifying equipment, instruction and training manuals for disabled employees;  
or

Any other adjustments that Chapter considers reasonable and necessary, provided such adjustments are within the financial means of the Cathedral as an organisation.

If an employee has a disability and feels that any such adjustments could be made, they should contact the Designated Officer

## **Responsibility for the Implementation of this Policy**

Third parties, such as volunteers, congregation, contractors or visitors are required to act in a way that does not subject any other members of the Cathedral staff team to direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of their race, sex, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation.

Chapter will not tolerate such actions against its staff, and the employee concerned should inform their line manager as soon as possible after an incident has occurred. Chapter will fully investigate any such incident and take all reasonable steps to ensure such behaviour does not happen again.

The co-operation of all employees is essential for the success of this Policy. All line managers are expected to follow this Policy and to try to ensure that all employees (including those working on a freelance basis) do the same.

Employees may be held independently and individually liable for their discriminatory acts by Chapter, and in some circumstances an Employment Tribunal may order them to pay compensation to the person who has suffered as a result of discriminatory acts.

Chapter takes responsibility for achieving the objectives of this Policy, and endeavours to ensure compliance with relevant Legislation and Codes of Practice.

## **Acting on Discriminatory Behaviour**

In the event that an employee is the subject of, or witness to, discriminatory behaviour or victimisation, they have the right to pursue a complaint referring to the Cathedral's Grievance Procedure.

In the event that an employee is the perpetrator of discriminatory behaviour or victimisation, this will be treated as a disciplinary offence and will be dealt with in accordance with the Cathedral's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

## **The Extent of the Policy**

Chapter seeks to apply this Policy in the recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, development and promotion of all employees. Chapter governs the Cathedral in a fashion that complies with the spirit of this Policy.

This Policy does not form a part of any employment contract with any employee and its contents are not to be regarded by any person as implied, collateral or express terms to any contract made with St Edmundsbury Cathedral.

Chapter reserves the right to amend and update this Policy at any time.

**April 2021**

## **Further information, advice and support on Discrimination**

### **Equality and Human Rights Commission**

*Website:* <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>

*Address:* Correspondence Unit  
Fleetbank House  
2-6 Salisbury Square  
London  
EC4Y 8JX

*Telephone:* 020 7832 7800

### **Equality Advisory and Support Service**

*Website:* <http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/>

*Address:* Freepost  
EASS Helpline  
FPN2561

*Helpline:* 0808 800 0082 (Free)

### **Citizens Advice**

*Website:* <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

*Address:* 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor North  
200 Aldersgate Street  
London  
EC1A 4HD

*Adviceline* 0800 144 8848 (Free)