

 OXFORD UNITED IN THE COMMUNITY <small>REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1125173</small>	OUICT Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	
	OUITC-EDI-002	
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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1. Introduction

Oxford United in the Community is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across all areas of its work. We want everyone who comes into contact with the charity to feel welcome, respected, safe and able to take part fully in our activities and services.

As the official charity of Oxford United Football Club, Oxford United in the Community supports the wider values of the Club and the All United project. However, this policy is the charity’s own policy. It reflects the charity’s distinct role, charitable purpose and responsibilities to participants, beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, trustees and community partners.

This policy sets out the charity’s commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, the standards expected across the organisation, and the arrangements for leadership, reporting and accountability.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to help ensure that Oxford United in the Community:

- Promotes a culture of dignity, fairness, respect and inclusion.
- Provides services, programmes and opportunities that are accessible and welcoming to all.
- Takes active steps to remove barriers to participation and involvement.
- Does not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or exclusion.
- Meets its legal, ethical and governance responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Learns from experience, feedback and incidents so that it can improve over time.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all those who work for, represent or engage with Oxford United in the Community, including full-time staff, part-time staff, sessional staff, trustees, volunteers, contractors and agency staff where relevant.

It also applies to the way the charity works with participants, beneficiaries, children and young people, parents and carers, partner organisations, schools, community groups, funders and members of the public.

This policy covers all charity activities, services and programmes, whether charitable or trading, including delivery in schools, community settings, matchday settings, events, digital communications and any other activity carried out in the name of Oxford United in the Community.

4. Policy statement

Oxford United in the Community believes that diversity strengthens the organisation and that inclusion improves both experience and impact. We are committed to creating an environment in which people are treated fairly and with respect, and where difference is recognised as a positive part of our work and our community.

We will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or exclusion on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, or on the basis of social or economic background, caring responsibilities or any other personal characteristic that may create disadvantage.

We recognise that equality, diversity and inclusion are not only about employment. They are also about how people experience our programmes, whether they feel welcome, whether they can access what we offer, whether they are listened to, and whether we respond properly when concerns arise.

5. Our commitments

Oxford United in the Community will seek to:

- Promote a culture in which everyone is treated with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- Provide fair and inclusive access to programmes, services, volunteering opportunities and employment.
- Consider the needs of participants and beneficiaries when designing and reviewing activities.
- Take reasonable steps to identify and reduce barriers to access, participation and progression.
- Support accessible communication and delivery, including for disabled participants and others who may need adjustments or additional support.
- Provide equality, diversity and inclusion training and guidance for staff, trustees and volunteers.
- Encourage feedback from participants, beneficiaries, staff, volunteers and partners in order to improve our approach.
- Respond appropriately, fairly and promptly to concerns, incidents and complaints relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.

- Develop and maintain a practical action plan so that our commitment is reflected in delivery as well as policy.

6. What this means in practice

Equality, diversity and inclusion will be considered in the way the charity recruits staff and volunteers, designs and delivers programmes, communicates with communities, works with partners, manages complaints and concerns, and reviews its own performance.

This means that the charity will seek to ensure that its activities are open and welcoming, that language and behaviour are respectful, that decisions are made fairly, and that no one is disadvantaged or excluded without good reason.

It also means that we will think specifically about the needs and experiences of participants and beneficiaries, rather than simply mirroring arrangements designed for the football club. This charity policy is intended to reflect the charity's own services, communities and responsibilities.

7. Leadership and accountability

The Trustee Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity gives proper attention to equality, diversity and inclusion and that this policy is implemented effectively.

Louise Gregory is the designated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead on the Trustee Board. She will provide Board-level oversight of EDI matters, support challenge and assurance, and help ensure that EDI remains visible within the governance of the charity.

Jem Faulkner, as Chair of the Trustee Board, is a main escalation point for serious concerns or issues requiring Board attention.

The **Chief Executive Officer** of Oxford United in the Community is responsible for ensuring that this policy is put into practice operationally and that appropriate systems, leadership, reporting arrangements and resources are in place.

Oxford United in the Community will also establish an EDI working group to support the development, delivery and review of a fuller multi-year action plan. The working group should help the charity move from policy intention to practical implementation.

8. Safeguarding and EDI

Oxford United in the Community recognises that equality, diversity and inclusion are closely linked to safeguarding. Some concerns may involve both discrimination and

safeguarding issues, particularly where children, young people, adults at risk or other vulnerable individuals are involved.

Where an issue has a safeguarding element, it must be reported in line with the charity's safeguarding procedures.

Chris Lowes is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Safeguarding concerns, or equality concerns with a safeguarding dimension, should be referred to him without delay.

Not all EDI concerns will be safeguarding matters. Some may instead be complaints, conduct issues, participation concerns, barriers to access or broader inclusion issues. These should still be reported and addressed appropriately under this policy and any related procedures.

9. Reporting concerns and incident management

Oxford United in the Community is committed to ensuring that concerns relating to equality, diversity and inclusion can be raised and addressed properly.

Staff, volunteers, participants, beneficiaries, parents, carers and others connected with the charity should have access to clear reporting routes where they experience or witness discrimination, harassment, bullying, exclusion or other inappropriate behaviour.

Concerns may be raised with a line manager, programme lead, senior manager, the Chief Executive Officer, Louise Gregory as Trustee EDI Lead, Jem Faulkner as Chair of Trustees, or Chris Lowes where safeguarding is involved.

The charity will aim to ensure that concerns are taken seriously, handled fairly, and considered at the appropriate level. Reporting mechanisms for staff and volunteers should sit alongside suitable arrangements for participants and beneficiaries, so that concerns can be raised safely and in a way that is accessible.

10. Training and awareness

Oxford United in the Community will provide appropriate equality, diversity and inclusion training and awareness for staff, trustees and volunteers.

This will include induction-level understanding, role-specific guidance where needed, and refresher learning over time. Training will support people not only to understand the policy, but also to recognise poor practice, respond appropriately and contribute to a more inclusive culture.

The charity recognises that training is one part of a wider EDI approach and should be supported by leadership, discussion, supervision and action planning.

11. Working with participants and beneficiaries

Because Oxford United in the Community is a community charity, this policy applies not only to the workplace but also to the experience of participants and beneficiaries.

The charity will seek to understand whether some groups are under-represented, face barriers to access, or have poorer experiences of programmes or services. It will use feedback, learning from incidents and complaints, and other relevant information to improve inclusion over time.

This means that EDI will be considered in programme planning, communications, accessibility, physical and digital environments, community engagement and the design of participation opportunities.

12. Monitoring, review and action planning

The charity will keep this policy under review and will monitor progress through governance and management arrangements.

This will include regular review of training completion, incidents and concerns, participant and beneficiary feedback, and progress against agreed actions.

Oxford United in the Community will develop a short-term EDI action plan to address immediate priorities, and then a fuller longer-term delivery plan through the proposed EDI working group.

The purpose of this approach is to ensure that the policy is supported by evidence, learning and practical action, rather than existing only as a statement of intent.

13. Related documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Oxford United in the Community Statement on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Oxford United in the Community Safeguarding Policies and Procedures
- Oxford United in the Community Complaints or Incident Reporting Procedures, where applicable
- Relevant recruitment, volunteering, conduct and disciplinary policies

14. Breaches of this policy

Any breach of this policy will be taken seriously.

Where concerns relate to staff, volunteers or trustees, they will be addressed through the relevant internal process. Where concerns relate to the experience of participants or beneficiaries, they will be considered under the appropriate reporting, safeguarding, complaints or management route.

Serious matters may be escalated to the Chief Executive Officer, the Trustee EDI Lead, the Chair of Trustees and, where relevant, the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

15. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary to reflect changes in law, guidance, organisational learning and the charity's developing EDI action plan.

February 2026