



Psychotherapy and Counselling Union (PCU): Equality, Equity & Diversity Policy

What the policy is for and what it covers:

We have written this policy to explain how we expect all members will behave towards other members, within PCU spaces (including meetings, emails and social media), and when representing PCU.

PCU is committed to encouraging equality, equity and diversity among our membership and eliminating discrimination as described in the Equality Act 2010. The aim is for our membership to be truly representative of all sections of society and for everyone involved in PCU to feel respected and able to give their best. PCU opposes unlawful discrimination towards members, other practitioners within the therapy field, and the public.

PCU's Constitution commits it "to propose and promote various changes and improvements in the institutions and practices associated with therapy, and in aspects of society into which our work gives us insight; to secure these aims by organisation and all other effective methods of unity of action". Equality, diversity & justice requires that this is applicable to anti-oppressive practice and conduct within PCU itself, and that PCU pays attention to power, privilege, micro-aggressions, intersectionality, racism and other forms of oppression.

Components of the policy

We recognise that many people in our society experience discrimination. Discrimination involves acting unfairly against a group or individual through for example exclusion, verbal comment, defamation, harassment, victimisation, a failure to appreciate needs or the assumption of such needs without consultation. Discrimination can be institutional, direct or indirect (where there is a condition, rule, policy or practice that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages

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people with a protected characteristic and cannot be justified). All forms of discrimination are unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

The policy's purpose is to:

Promote equality, fairness and respect within all PCU functioning & provision including but not limited to such areas as governance, committee functioning, working environment, member support, volunteering, campaigning activities, meetings & events, one to one conduct, and PCU internet forums. To promote positive action measures to redress past and present discrimination, both individual and institutional, to work towards full equality.

Ensure what is understood by unlawful discrimination as described in the Equality Act 2010 covering all the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation. Additional areas where people may experience discrimination, oppression, marginalising or silencing include family situation, caring responsibilities, socio-economic background, trade union activity, employment, health or legal status. This list is not exhaustive.

Ensure that PCU's committee members, employed staff, volunteers, and the wider membership oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes PCU's working practices, events, internal processes, dealing with grievances and discipline, and all campaigning and support offered by PCU (including online communications).

Responsibilities

All members will be made aware of PCU's Equality, Equity and Diversity policy and will be expected to comply & cooperate with it. PCU's committee, volunteers, and employed staff have a responsibility to raise awareness of the issue, respond positively to any complaints and challenge and stop unacceptable behaviour within PCU.

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Members, employed staff, attendees, or anyone engaging within PCU who feel they have been discriminated against, should raise the matter with a member of the committee or can do so via PCU's administrative staff:

Tracey Thompson 07388 010889

Milton Sattler 07307 873367

admin@pcunion.org.uk

Please bear in mind that both Administrators work part-time and aim to answer any inquiry as soon as possible.

It may be that discriminatory action is unwitting and can be resolved informally once the problem is clear. If the complainant or others involved are dissatisfied with the outcome, if the complaint is very serious, or if a committee member, volunteer, or employed staff are the cause of the complaint, the person should raise the matter, in writing, as a formal complaint or grievance and it will be addressed in keeping with PCU's Rule Book, Constitution, or where necessary within ACAS guidelines.

Details of how harassment, bullying and violence will be tackled are covered in PCU's Anti-Harassment, Bullying and Violence Policy, which can be found on the website:

<https://www.psychotherapyandcounsellingunion.co.uk/>

PCU commits to:

Encouraging & creating a culture of equality, equity and diversity within PCU as good practice.

This involves members educating themselves, ongoing conversation, supporting each other, and also includes the possibility of conflict involved in challenging oppressive attitudes and behaviour.

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Create a working environment and union spaces free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and contributions of members are recognised and valued.

Our members, including committee and volunteers, must ensure that PCU provides equal opportunities in access to and participation in PCU settings, spaces and events (whether in person or online), and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. All members, should understand that they can be held liable for any acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination they carry out against fellow members, or colleagues within the field, in the course of their involvement with PCU. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the PCU's Rulebook, or where necessary ACAS guidelines, and appropriate action will be taken.

PCU will take seriously any complaints received regarding bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, and will investigate using the agreed procedures and respecting confidentiality.

PCU commits to:

Monitoring the make-up of the membership regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this equality policy.

Reviewing working practices, union events, campaigns, recruitment and other union procedures and activities when necessary to ensure fairness and equity, and also updating them and this policy to take account of changes in the law. The committee will do this in consultation with members.

Monitoring and review will be conducted confidentially and may include questionnaires, surveys, consultation and feedback. The purpose of this monitoring is to identify possible patterns of inequality, investigate their underlying causes and remove or redress any unfairness of disadvantage. PCU recognises people's right to be open about certain characteristics such as (but

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not limited to) sexual orientation, transgender or other gender identity and their right to keep this confidential. We recognise that this has implications for record-keeping, for how some rights can be accessed, and for how complaints of discrimination are reported and investigated.

Disciplinary Consequences

PCU does not tolerate discrimination and any such behaviour will immediately trigger an investigation in accordance with our Rules which could lead to disciplinary action. PCU will investigate every breach of this policy and take appropriate action against any person who intentionally, or unintentionally, breaches it.

Any member involved in PCU's functioning & activities who does not comply with this policy will be subject to action under/ prescribed by the PCU's Rulebook, Constitution, or in necessary circumstances subject to ACAS guidelines or legal frameworks and may ultimately be removed from PCU and face criminal charges.

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