

Glossary of Terms

Accessible information

See alternative format.

Accessible venue

A building designed and / or altered to ensure that people, including disabled people, can enter and move round freely and access its events and facilities.

Act

A law or piece of legislation passed by both Houses of Parliament and agreed to by the Crown, which then becomes part of statutory law (ie is enacted).

Age

This refers to a person belonging to a particular age group, which can mean people of the same age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds, or people over 50).

All reasonable steps

In relation to harassment by an employee, all the things which the employer could reasonably have done to stop it; in relation to reasonable adjustments, 'reasonable steps' is another term for the things that the employer could reasonably have done to remove the disadvantage.

Alternative format

Media formats which are accessible to disabled people with specific impairments, for example Braille, audio description, subtitles and easy read.

Customers

People who use services.

Different needs

Refers to the different requirements that people with protected characteristics may have which either must or should be met to provide equality, including equality of opportunity and access

Direct discrimination

Less favourable treatment of a person compared with another person because of a protected characteristic.

Disability

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Disadvantage

A detriment or impediment – something that the individual affected might reasonably consider changes their position for the worse.

Discriminate unlawfully

When an employer has treated someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic (discriminated against them) and does not have a valid defence.

Diversity

Where many different types of people are included

Duty to make reasonable adjustments

Where a disabled person is at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled, there is a duty to take reasonable steps to remove that disadvantage by (i) changing provisions, criteria or practices, (ii) altering, removing or providing a reasonable alternative means of avoiding physical features and (iii) providing auxiliary aids

Equality and diversity policy

A statement of an organisation's commitment to the principle of equality of opportunity in the workplace.

Equality training

Training on equality law and effective equality practice

Exceptions

Where, in specified circumstances, a provision of the Act does not apply

Flexible working

Working different hours or at home to accommodate childcare commitments

Goods, facilities or services

Goods refer to moveable property, facilities to opportunities to enjoy a benefit or do something and services refer to provisions for meeting people's needs. Goods, facilities and services are available to the public or any part of it.

Impairment

A functional limitation which may lead to a person being defined as disabled according to the definition under the Act.

Less favourably

Worse, not as well as.

Elected Member

People who have been voted by the public to be a Council Member.

Monitor

See monitoring.

Monitoring

Monitoring for equality data to check if people with protected characteristics are participating and being treated equally. For example, monitoring the representation of women, or disabled people, in the workforce or at senior levels within organisations.

Objective justification

When something (e.g. an otherwise discriminatory action) can be objectively justified.

Occupational requirement

Where having a protected characteristic is an occupational requirement, certain jobs can be reserved for people with that protected characteristic.

Physical barriers

A physical feature of a building or premises which places disabled people at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled people when accessing goods, facilities and services or employment.

Positive action

Refers to a range of lawful actions that seek to overcome or minimise disadvantages (e.g. in employment opportunities) that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs.

Procurement

Is the term used in relation to the range of goods and services a public body or authority requires and delivers. It includes sourcing and appointment of a service provider and the subsequent management of the goods and services being provided.

Proportionate

This refers to measures or actions that are appropriate and necessary. Whether something is proportionate in the circumstances will be a question of fact and will involve weighing up the discriminatory impact of the action against the reasons for it, and asking if there is any other way of achieving the aim.

Protected characteristics

These are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Provision, criterion or practice

Identifying a provision, criterion or practice is key to establishing indirect discrimination. It can include for example, any formal or informal policies, decisions, rules, practices, arrangements, criteria, conditions, prerequisites or qualifications.

Public authority

Organisations and individuals that carry out public functions - this would include government departments, local authorities, health authorities and hospitals, schools, prisons, and police for example.

Public functions

Any act or activity undertaken by a public authority in relation to delivery of a public service or carrying out duties or functions of a public nature e.g. the provision of policing and prison services, healthcare, including residential care of the elderly, government policy making or local authority planning services.

Public sector equality duty

The duty on a public authority when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity.

Reasonable

What is considered reasonable will depend on all the circumstances of the case including the size of an organisation and its resources, what is practicable, the effectiveness of what is being proposed and the likely disruption that would be caused by taking the measure in question as well as the availability of financial assistance

Reasonable adjustment

See the duty to make reasonable adjustments

Regulations

Secondary legislation made under an Act of Parliament (or European legislation) setting out subsidiary matters which assist in the Act's implementation

Service complaint

A complaint about service delivery

Service provider

Someone (including an organisation) who provides services, goods or facilities to the general public or a section of it

Service users

Those accessing or using a particular service

Services

See services, goods or facilities

Services, Goods or Facilities

This refers to services, goods or facilities provided to the public by public or private providers. The definition excludes public functions and benefits, facilities and services provided by clubs and associations. See also goods, facilities and services.

SMT

Strategic Management Team. This includes the Council's Heads of Service.

Terms of employment

The provisions of a person's contract of employment, whether provided for expressly in the contract itself or incorporated by statute, custom and practice or common law etc.

Textphone

A type of telephone for deaf or hard of hearing people which is attached to a keyboard and a screen on which the messages sent and received are displayed

Trade unions

These are organisations formed to represent workers' rights and interests to their employers, for example in order to improve working conditions, wages or benefits. They also advocate more widely on behalf of their members' interests and make recommendations to government, industry bodies and other policy makers.

Transsexual person

Refers to a person who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. This may be a woman who has transitioned or is transitioning to be a man, or a man who has transitioned or is transitioning to be a woman. The law does not require a person to undergo a medical procedure to be recognised as a transsexual.

Two Ticks' Symbol

A sign awarded by Jobcentre Plus to employers who are positive about employing disabled people and are committed to employ, keep and develop disabled staff

UK Text Relay Service

Text Relay is a national telephone relay service for deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, deafblind and speech-impaired people. It lets them use a textphone to access any services that are available on standard telephone systems.

Unfavourably

The term is used (instead of less favourable) where a comparator is not required to show that someone has been subjected to a detriment or disadvantage because of a protected characteristic – for example in relation to pregnancy and maternity discrimination.

Unlawful

Not permitted by law (as distinct from illegal which means 'forbidden by law'). On occasions, unlawful and illegal may be synonymous, but unlawful is more correctly applied in relation to civil (as opposed to criminal) wrongs.

Unreasonable

Not reasonable, beyond what's practicable. See also reasonable.

Worker

In employment law, worker is generally a wider category than employee and includes a contract personally to do work.