



# Diversity – Equal Opportunities Policy

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Document title	Diversity Policy
Version	October 2025 amended January 2026
Responsible committee	HR Committee
Author	J Davies, Gill Clough
Date effective from	January 2026
Date last amended	January 2026
Review date	January 2028
Who this document applies to:	All staff; All volunteers including Trustees.

## **1. Purpose and Scope**

This policy applies to all OPAL employees, trustees and volunteers, and to all people receiving or requesting OPAL services.

## **2. Valuing Diversity**

OPAL Services (Rural West Cheshire) is committed to valuing diversity and seeks to provide all employees, trustees and volunteers with the opportunity for employment/volunteering, career and personal development on the basis of ability, qualifications and suitability for the work/volunteering as well as their potential to be developed into the job/role.

This commitment to valuing diversity also extends to older people and carers who are, or may be, receivers of OPAL's services. Any person receiving or requesting a service from OPAL will not be treated less favourably because of their age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

OPAL recognises and prohibits all forms of unlawful discrimination including direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation as defined under the Equality Act 2010. OPAL will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination against any person on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation whether in the field of recruitment, terms and conditions of employment or volunteering, training and development or dismissal, or during its provision of services.

It is also your responsibility in your daily actions, decisions and behaviour to endeavour to promote these concepts, to comply with all relevant legislation and to ensure that you do not discriminate against colleagues, partners or any other person associated with OPAL.

In adopting these principles OPAL:

1. Will not tolerate acts that breach this policy, and all such breaches or alleged breaches will be taken seriously, be fully investigated and may be subject to disciplinary action where appropriate.
2. Fully recognises its legal obligations under all relevant legislation and codes of practice.
3. Expects you (as an employee or volunteer) to pursue any matter which you believe has exposed you to inequitable treatment through OPAL's grievance procedure (staff) / complaints procedure (volunteers).
4. Will ensure that all employees and volunteers understand and maintain their responsibilities under this policy.
5. Will offer opportunities for flexible working patterns, wherever justifiable and operationally feasible, to help you balance work and caring responsibilities.
6. Will provide equal opportunity to all who apply for vacancies through open competition.
7. Will select candidates based on their ability to carry out the job, using a clear and open process.
8. Will provide you with the training and development that you need to carry out your job effectively.

9. Will provide all reasonable assistance if you are or if you become disabled, making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to provide continued employment/volunteering. OPAL will carry out a risk assessment and obtain appropriate specialist advice when necessary.

### **3. Monitoring and Review**

OPAL will collect and review anonymised equality-monitoring data on staff, volunteers and service users to identify trends, barriers or under-representation, and will take action to address any issues revealed. All data will be handled in accordance with data-protection law.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years —or sooner if there are significant legal or organisational changes.