



Equal Care Facilitator (Calder Valley)

[You can apply for this role on our website](#)

Contents

[Role description of Equal Care Facilitator](#)

[Recruitment & Selection Policy](#)

[Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy](#)

[Equality & Inclusion Questionnaire \(anonymous\) - click here to complete](#)

Summary

Your role is to find, support, represent and introduce people and their families to Equal Care Co-op's introductory service and to get their support and care relationship with their new care workers off to the best start. You'll also be the point person to go to for solving difficulties.

You are 'carrying' the caring relationships which exist between people being supported, their involved family members and the paid workers supporting them.

This role is part of a pilot - some of the activities described below are dependent on the development of Equal Care's digital offering and will come into play over the course of next year.

The basics

Salary

£25,000 - £28,000 dependent on experience and qualifications



Full-time or part-time?	Either. Your choice.
Flexible working okay?	Yes, of course, though be mindful that some people may need to meet you outside normal working hours.
Job share allowed?	Yes, that too
Can I combine it with other roles in Equal Care Co-op?	Yes, absolutely
Where is it?	The role geography matches the Calder Valley Social Work team area (i.e. including Sowerby Bridge) but for the first year will be in Hebden Bridge, Todmorden, Blackshaw Head and office time in Halifax. Your place of work will be University Business Centre, 27 Horton St, Halifax HX1 1QE.
Do I need a car?	No, but it would really help with getting to people for your one to ones and one to twos. If you can drive but don't have a car we'll sign you up to the local eco friendly car club. We also welcome avid cyclists!
Key Circle (i.e. main team)	People
Link Person (i.e. main person to support you)	Kate Hammon (for first year)
Your Links	Independent care and support workers who you train to be Equal Care Facilitators (ad-hoc) + team members on a rotating annual basis
Circle Roles	You may be nominated into these as part of your work.



Disabilities and differences welcome?

More than welcome - actively welcome. Please apply!
We're disability confident and a mindful employer and we're committed to doing our bit to erode the disability & mental health employment gap.

Key documents

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Recruitment, Selection & Welcome

What you'll be doing

We like and support dynamic and emerging work roles. Each section below should be treated as a mini-role in its own right and the share of time you spend on each will change. Significant changes are agreed as part of the consent process with your circle and you lead on your role review at least biennially. You will act upon the role, helping to sculpt it and shape the experiences of facilitators who will follow in your footsteps.

Help people navigate the care system

The care system is slow, disconnected and difficult to understand. You can help take out some of the pain in dealing with it.

- Advocacy, sending letters on behalf of people struggling with the assessment process
- Social care assessment support
- Be a shoulder to cry on when it all gets too frustrating
- Being the advocate for the relationships you're carrying both internally and externally

Know the people in charge of the care system in your area

Good working relationships with the people in charge can't hurt - you'll be doing your bit to make the system work in the interest of the people it's supposed to serve.

- Connect with GPs, Social Workers, hospital staff and others likely to refer or be in charge of people's care packages
- Work with business development on setting up new contracts and bringing in new referrals



Help people join Equal Care Co-op

Digital services are not everybody's cup of tea. We want people to be able to join and interact with Equal Care through any way they are most comfortable with - over the phone, face-to-face, through the post.

- Introduce people to Equal Care, tell people about the service and how to get started
- Have conversations with people coming on to the platform, looking at the website (telephone & chat), walking people through the application process over the phone, posting tailored information out to them
- Have one to ones with people who want to know how it works

Be a match-maker

The care and support relationship is fundamental. A good one can lengthen people's lives, avoid stress and burnout, preserve and protect the wellbeing of both people involved and lead to much better health outcomes. For those relationships to flourish they need grounded, committed support from others to get things off to a great start.

- Have those first, crucial conversations with people and their families looking for support
- Carry out facilitated matches where people want these (i.e. you go along for each new introduction)
- Write the support plan and summary profile for care workers to view and volunteers as appropriate
- Ensure that the relevant contracts and consent are signed
- Get to know the independent care and support workers and community volunteers in your area
- Ensure that someone is nominated to lead on co-ordinating the support in the person's team (could be a family member, the person themselves, a care and support worker)
- Help people use the app or use paper booklet to help them choose
- Help people select, book and pay for trial support sessions

Support, training & recruitment

The work of equal care facilitators also crosses over into a freelance, ad-hoc role as needed.

- Train independent workers in carrying out initial visits
- Recruit independent workers (who have already gone through the full recruitment process for Equal Care) to carry out this role on an independent basis, carrying fewer relationships
- Support or cover for any independent workers in their matching and facilitation roles



- Participate in recruitment processes for independent workers joining Equal Care Co-op (review applications, sit on interview panel)

Solving problems

Relationships are complex and can get into difficulties. The caring relationship needs support from others to thrive.

- You are the go-to person for new caring relationships that run into issues: this is for both the person getting the support and their family and the care worker.
- Problem-solving could involve all sorts of activities: helping to find back-up at short notice (must be requested by the person needing support, not the care worker due to CQC requirements), facilitating and resolving a disagreement, helping a care worker raise a Safeguarding concern or identifying and raising a concern yourself.
- Where people have had an independent introduction (i.e. they found and engaged their care worker entirely through the Eccoo website) their Equal Care Facilitator becomes whichever person picks up the phone if they ring with a problem.
- Making sure that problems help to change future practice, sharing them with the rest of the team and helping people learn from them.

Tell people about Equal Care

We don't do traditional advertising to let people know about us, but we need people to find out about us somehow and we want to do it in a way that involves as few 'faces' as possible before people get direct support.

- Give talks and Q&A sessions at extra care, sheltered accommodation, health centre and other local groups (with Circle Community Organiser as needed)
- Take part in events and some Community Support Circle meetings
- Post on Equal Care's twitter and facebook pages
- Contribute to newsletters

Offering support

At least 5% of your working hours should be giving direct support to someone getting social care (note this is not charged to people and is part of Equal Care's voluntary offering)

Contribute to the design of Equal Care's digital service

We're building technology that fits our purpose, our ethos and our goals. We can't do this without you.

- Test out new versions and contribute new / improvement ideas
- Feedback difficulties you and other people encounter



- Participate in design and user testing days

Co-create your own role

This role is part of a pilot - we expect it to change! We need you to help shape it.

- The equal care facilitator role is a crucial anchor role connecting people to the platform, the co-operative and each other. We don't know yet which of your activities will be the one most crucial to the success of people's ongoing care and support relationships and to the co-operative as a whole.
- We expect a lot of the tools and processes you use and participate in your day-to-day work will change and evolve. We need your active participation in shaping these.

A 'typical' week

A presentation to a local sheltered housing organisation results in immediate interest in Equal Care Co-op from two people and 'watching and waiting' interest from others. You have a one to one with each of the two, introducing them to the platform and service.

You get routed several expressions of interest from the website, coming from people who want to know more and get a call from you before signing up. You make five calls in the day, explain more about the service and listen to people. One person is able to register online with you on the phone to them. You make three follow-up face to face appointments with people who don't want to go online and want to speak directly to you first about their support.

One person signs up for a trial support session during the face to face appointment and the other two need you to help out with their social care budgets. You write a couple of letters to their social workers as part of your visit, which helps move their Local Authority care assessment along.

Some days you are in the office. Other days, you're out and about.

Your phone rings a few times a day with new enquiries. You talk to people about the service. Some are okay with then moving on to sign up independently but most want a face to face chat, where you go out and either do a more detailed introduction of Equal Care for them to mull over or go straight ahead with finding someone suitable to support them. You book a meeting with an independent care worker who's interested in beginning to facilitate matches on an ad-hoc basis.

You get a call from someone who hasn't been invoiced as they expected - you take it up with the person responsible for this and move it along. You get a call from a care worker you matched a couple of months ago - she's frustrated, doesn't want to stop supporting the person but is having issues with a family member. You call the family member to talk about this and ask them what you can do to help. The family member agrees to a facilitated meeting with you and the care worker and you use your problem-solving and listening skills to help bring things to an outcome everyone can agree to.

What you're like



You are a calm, articulate, kind person. People feel safe around you and you inspire trust in others. You are relationship-focussed, able to empathize with several perspectives (family members, caregivers, people getting support). Your writing style prioritises representing people in their own voices and does not 'translate' people's words into medicalised or overly formal language. They can recognise themselves and feel heard and seen in your writing.

You are self-directed, adaptable and focussed on solutions. You're fine with ambiguity and if you seek clarity and don't find it you work to create it. You are imaginative and good at seeing many possible outcomes. You see people in terms of their potential and their strengths.

(Don't be discouraged if you don't immediately recognise yourself in the description above. It is our experience that many people in caring roles are not so brilliant at seeing their own merits. If you struggle with this, get family and friends to read the paragraph above and they'll see qualities you may have missed).

Your experience & qualifications

If you've had about 70% of these experiences that's great, the rest can be learned (and we'll provide whichever training is the right fit for you). We haven't divided things into essential v desirable but if you can see only a few things on this list that apply to you this may not be the right role for you right now.

Experience

- Facilitating small groups
- One to one or one to two sessions where you are taking a supportive or leadership role
- Resolving conflict and concerns between individuals
- Teaching or coaching people one to one, especially about topics with a relational focus (like facilitation or caring)
- Writing care and support notes, plans and risk assessments
- Doing direct care and support work
- Using / evaluating digital products (e.g. a care planning app, customer relationship management software)
- Support brokerage, link or social work or a similar role involving connecting people with one another

Qualifications (together with significant experience of the above) likely to attract the higher rate of pay are:

- Social Work, Nursing, Level 4/5 Diploma in Health and Social Care area, degree in related subject



Your backstage support

People

These are issue experts, there to support and advise you. They may - in very rare circumstances - lead on particularly complex, high risk or sensitive issues. But you are the one with the power to solve the problem and with the key relationships in place to do this. Think of the experts as your advisory team to help with the legal, practical and emotional aspects of an issue.

- Coach (Registered Manager equivalent)
- Safeguarding Lead
- Health and Safety Lead
- Complaints & Feedback Lead
- HR support
- Data protection Lead
- Learning & Training Lead

App & Documentation

- The roadmap for any complaints, health & safety and safeguarding processes
- Printed materials on what to do

Training

We (or you) will arrange any training you need to carry out your role well. This will include things like:

- Safeguarding
- Health & Safety
- Resolving conflict / facilitation
- Conversations, support planning, risk assessing

Inclusion

We are a Disability Confident and Mindful Employer

About Disability Confident: A Disability Confident employer will offer an interview to any applicant that declares they have a disability and meets the minimum criteria for the job as defined by the employer.



Recruitment and selection

If you remember nothing else, remember this:

- Recruitment and selection is stressful and has in-built inequitable power dynamics. Let's all try and make this as human as possible.
- All members of a recruiting panel need to do our recruitment training.
- The interview panel must help each other to make reasoned decisions that can be backed up by evidence, not opinions.

Why we need this policy

 We need to find and hire the right people. We want a diverse, skilled, learning workforce who think that Equal Care Co-op's vision and plan is amazing. They've found an organisation they really, really want to join.

We need to respect that they are evaluating us just as much as we are evaluating them. Most importantly, this policy will help us put power and decision-making over who joins Equal Care Co-op into the hands of the people who give and get support.

 We need to comply with Employment Act 2008, Equality Act 2010, the EU Working Time Directive and the Care Act 2014. We're also working to CQC standards, which have a lot to say about recruitment.

Who it affects

- External and internal applicants to job roles
- Workers, Supported and Advocate members involved in recruitment and selection
- Freelance contractors
- Volunteers
- Independent care and support workers
- Any external consultants or recruitment agencies involved in recruitment and selection of our staff

Key Players

Recruiting Circle



In charge!

Creates new roles, adapts existing ones, launches recruitment exercises and leads on the work. Bolstered by members of the People circle where needed.

People Circle

HR specialists, needed for some sign-offs and checks for developing circles.

Lead Recruiter

Generally this is a member of staff but doesn't have to be. This person also holds the admin and communication with applicants, arranges the interview panel and sifts applications.

This role requires extra training and onboarding.

Recruitment Panel

Anywhere between two and four people.

At least one person who has direct, active experience of receiving support (may also be a family member though priority is to have someone receiving support).

At least one person who does direct caregiving for the majority of their role (every Worker at Equal Care does minimum 5% direct care and support work).

The other one or two people will be subject / technical specialists, usually leading on that circle's work.

Outcomes we want

1. A fair, safe, inclusive recruitment process
2. A highly diverse and skilled worker membership
3. Power and influence over recruitment for those who give and those who receive support



Impact

Impact type	On who
Cost	Payment to recruiting Circle members. Avoidance of employment tribunal costs.
Health and Wellbeing	A fully staffed organisation - no burnout!
Equality	Everyone applying to work with us, especially people living with disability or experiencing marginalised identity who apply for a role with Equal Care Co-op
Time	Of all workers involved in the recruitment and selection process.
Data	A lot of personal data gathered that must be securely stored and dealt with in compliance with GDPR.

Where roles come from

Each Recruiting Circle has its own budget and that's where the costs for new roles are covered. Budgets are set annually with the membership and are determined by the overall strategy of the co-operative.

Circles will create or adapt existing roles and they'll check that role descriptions and person specifications work properly with this policy and our approach to pay. Finally, a member of the People Circle or a trained person in the Recruiting Circle will review the role description and person specification to check they meet employment and equality law.

Story: The Dev Circle decides that it needs to recruit a developer. This is a new role so there is no previous role description or person specification available. They use the proposal shaping process and the consent round to create the role description, person specification and set salary in line with the Pay and Salary Policy and consider the role in light of the overall ethos, purpose and values of the co-operative.

The finalised draft is then checked by either a member of the People Circle or trained person in the Dev Circle to check it meets the needs of employment law and equality and diversity regulations. This person changes the phrase 'must have UK qualification in...' by adding 'or equivalent non UK qualification' so as to avoid indirectly discriminating against people who studied outside the UK.

How roles can fit the person

We are big fans of flexible working, supplementary training and adapting roles to fit the person. We make this an active discussion rather than rely on people making requests.



Story: Monique was successful in an application to become a training lead. She declared that she has a disability and explained at interview that she suffers from depression in the winter, especially in December and January. During these times she finds it very hard to get up and get going in the mornings. Following the job offer the Lead Recruiter sits down with Monique to talk about how to adapt the role and together they come up with a plan.

Monique takes on a contract that works for 10 months of the year – February to November – and her salary for the 10 months is split into 12 monthly payments. The recruiting circle and Monique devise a variety of creative work-arounds for the two months without a training lead.

Telling people about the role

Job adverts can't (obviously) be discriminatory. But it's (obviously) not that simple. Here's some really useful guidance. For more info take a look at our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

The application form, role description, person specification and equal opportunities data monitoring form all goes onto our website. All our forms are online and can be completed via voice or written text.

Internally:

- All posts will be advertised internally. Worker Members of the co-op will get the first opportunity to apply for roles (this includes volunteers and independent workers).
- The circle may choose to only advertise internally. This is a good idea when a current member of staff could develop into the role or where there is a suitable group of people available already with those areas of expertise (like those offering independent and voluntary support for example).

Externally:

- External advertising will be through our website, twitter, facebook and linked in. The real impact through is through community networks, so we'll need help from our members to let people know when roles come up. Paid-for advertising is the recruiting Circle's decision and paid for by that Circle.

We put out loads of information about a role to help people make an upfront decision about whether or not they want to go for it.

We will talk to people about the role outside the recruitment process, answer questions and help clarify any confusion. We've found this really helps people decide whether or not



joining the co-operative would be right for them (it's more of a 'they interview us' opportunity, involving cake and a hot drink).

Application & Interview

The formal bit of the process starts once that person submits the application form. We generally invite everyone to interview unless we get floods of applications. If someone submits an application that's low on detail or incomplete we will get back to them to check that's their final submission and/or to ask clarifying questions before inviting them to an interview.

For technical hires (e.g. coders) the interview process may be split into two: one technical and one ethos interview.

We are a care and support organisation. And although we're not yet regulated by the CQC (as an introductory agency) we are working to their standards. This means we have to ask about any gaps in people's employment history and - for the care and support roles only - their reasons for leaving.

We will always send the interview questions in advance and the majority of questions will be competency-based (asking people to share specific times when they showed the qualities, skills and values we're after).

Following the interview the panel will share their thoughts on how the person matched up to the job description and person specification and complete a feedback form that's then shared with the person by the Lead Recruiter. Decision to employ is a consent decision between the panel members with a voting fallback.





The offer!

We will make conditional offers to people, subject to pre-joining checks. For independent care and support workers joining the platform we may ask them to wait and join a following cohort. The checks include:

- References from at least two different sources: one from the current or most recent employer and one from somebody they have supported directly (or two employers / two people supported depending on situation and role).
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check plus a DBS Risk Assessment where we get a positive disclosure
- Proof of eligibility to work in the UK
- Driving Licence (where required)
- Proof of highest and most relevant qualifications

We will also find out how we can support the person's health and wellbeing, including if they tell us things about their mental and physical health that they didn't feel able to during the interview process. This won't affect the offer of the role but it might result in changes to it that we agree together with the person.

Story: Kareem scored well at interview and we gave him a conditional offer of work, subject to checks. He disclosed at interview that he had been convicted of shoplifting and was very candid about his personal circumstances at the time. When his DBS check arrives the only thing mentioned is the shoplifting offence from 2005. As this was so long ago and his record has been clean ever since the panel decide that this does not prevent them from offering the role to Kareem.

Ming also scored well at interview and we made a conditional offer. She also disclosed a conviction, for assault. Her DBS check revealed that the conviction was in 2016 and she was also convicted of racial abuse. With such a recent conviction and one against the equality and diversity policy as well as the fact that she didn't fully disclose this, we withdraw the offer.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

If you remember nothing else, remember this:

- We will not tolerate discrimination in any form.
- We want everybody to be able to contribute towards how we work and to bring their own uniqueness to work.
- We will encourage and enable all workers to take part in and contribute to Equal Care's decision-making processes and operations.
- We want everybody to feel respected, that they belong, empowered and to receive fair progression.
- We celebrate difference!

Why we need this policy

- So that all individuals and groups of people are treated equally and without discrimination.
- So that each person is recognised as unique and that their differences and what they can contribute are celebrated.
- To ensure we are encouraging, enabling and respecting each individual so that they feel a sense of belonging and can contribute to the best of their abilities.
- People need to feel comfortable and supported to constructively challenge prejudicial and discriminatory beliefs and actions.
- To ensure we comply with all relevant legislation and best practice, in particular the Equality Act 2010.

Who it affects

Absolutely everyone!

Key players

The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion should be understood and followed by the whole of society.



For Equal Care Co-op, this policy is particularly important for anybody:

- Giving or receiving care and support
- Involved in recruitment, selection and induction of workers

Connected policies and forms

- Codes of conduct
- Recruitment, selection and welcome
- Safeguarding adults

Outcomes we want

- No gender, ethnicity or disability pay gap
- To reverse inequitable trends in care work
- To seek out and tackle health inequalities
- For people to wholeheartedly agree that they're in an inclusive workplace

Impact

Impact type	On who
Cost	Improved performance and engagement for workers, and avoidance of prosecution and employment tribunals for the co-op.
Health and Wellbeing	Improved health and wellbeing of all stakeholders through acceptance and support of difference.
Equality	Achieving equality, increasing diversity of people participating in the work of the co-op.
Time	Potentially longer processes and procedures.
Data	Collection of data to monitor diversity of co-operative members and other stakeholders.



“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” Maya Angelou

“We're here to stand up for freedom, compassion and justice in our changing times. Our work is driven by a simple belief; if everyone gets a fair chance in life, we all thrive.”

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Equality

We believe in equality for everybody, regardless of their differences, in fact, we celebrate difference! It makes us a more rounded and exciting organisation. We all want to be treated fairly. Nobody wants to be discriminated against. These are simple human rights: to live in a society where nobody says or does anything that results in a social or economic disadvantage - an inequality.

This principle is enshrined in law in the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone.

There are nine aspects of identity which are protected by law. These are known as the protected characteristics.

Many groups and individuals in societies are oppressed and disadvantaged due to discrimination directed against them simply because they carry these markers of identity, such as being young, old, gay, pregnant or black. The voices and experiences of oppressed and disadvantaged identities are fundamental to how we work, provide a service and produce the words and products of Equal Care Co-op.

We are working towards an equal society free from discrimination and expect all our workers to support this aim wholeheartedly, with the courage to actively challenge prejudicial comments and discriminatory behaviours in others as well as notice these in ourselves.

The promotion of equal opportunities requires more than passive opposition to discrimination. It requires courage and it requires positive action. Positive action is working to address and correct systemic inequalities. For example, a job advert asking for someone living with a disability is working to address the huge disability employment gap.

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY



In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.



In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.

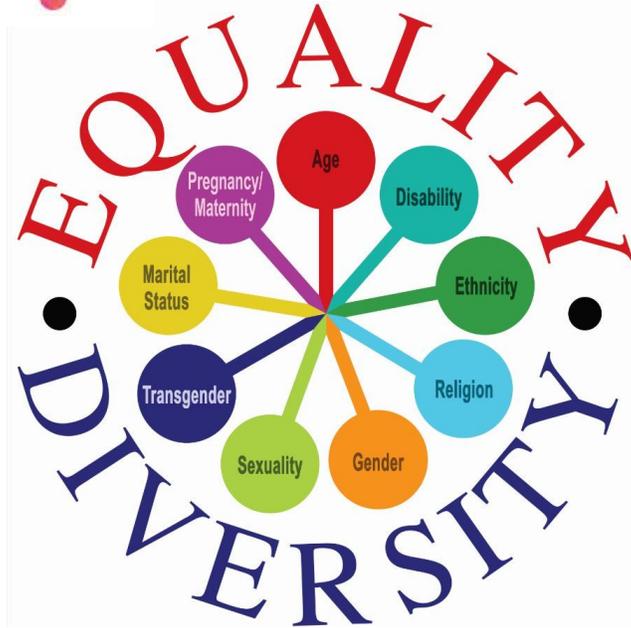


In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

Find more excellent discussion of equality, equity and inclusion on the [Fearless Futures](#) website.

Examples of indirect discrimination:

- Indirect age discrimination - only promoting staff with a postgraduate qualification. Younger staff are unlikely to have this.
- Indirect race discrimination - stating that candidates for a job must have a UK qualification. People might have an equally good qualification achieved abroad.
- Indirect sex discrimination - insisting all staff work full time. At this point in history, the majority of people who are the main carers of their children are still women. By insisting everyone clocks in and clocks off at the same time you exclude more women than men by using this policy.
- Indirect religious discrimination - stating that all staff must work on a given day. Different faiths have different holy days and this requirement would conflict.



Diversity

At the same time as treating everybody equally, we know that we are each different and unique human beings. We all think, feel and act in our own ways and bring our own unique perspective and outlook. We want to recognise this diversity and celebrate what each person can contribute. Differences in thought and outlook lead to ideas and new ways of doing things.

We want everybody to be able to contribute towards how we work and to bring their own uniqueness to work.

Story: A small care agency, based in a predominantly white part of town, recruited staff

locally and therefore had a predominantly white workforce. When they tried to expand into a more racially diverse area they found that their contracts were often cancelled. On investigation they found that this was because many of their potential clients had English as a second language and thus had trouble communicating with the care staff. The agency contacted local minority support groups for advice. Following their advice, it was then able to target its recruitment to attract staff from more diverse backgrounds who shared a common cultural and linguistic heritage.



Inclusion

Inclusion is the active joining together of a diverse workforce in an organisation's work processes. Inviting a large group of players of various musical instruments to join an orchestra will create a diversity of musicians. Getting the orchestra to all play the same score will create inclusion, something much greater than that of all the musicians playing solo.

To achieve inclusion, we will enable all workers to take part in and contribute to Equal



Care's decision-making processes and operations.

Understanding Inclusion

The need for equality and diversity is widely recognised amongst organisations, (even if only to keep within the law), and many appreciate its advantages, but inclusion is less well understood. The following explains Equal Care's understanding of the benefits of inclusion, and the barriers to inclusion and how to overcome them.

Without inclusion, the challenges of a diverse workforce can outweigh its benefits. Prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping, isolation and communication and cultural barriers may prevent workers from minority groups fully contributing to workplace decision-making and practices.

Inclusion involves an organisational culture that values, embraces and celebrates individual differences. For most organisations, this involves a significant change of culture. For a long time, organisations have been run on the assumption that similarity in a workforce is good for business because it avoids many of the challenges associated with diversity. Workplaces were said to be more efficient when everyone understands and plays by the same rule-book. Organisations have worked hard to clearly define 'the way things are done around here'. To encourage conformity, people who display the 'right' qualities and behaviours, that fit with the organisational culture, are hired and rewarded. Counter-cultural behaviour is discouraged and penalised.

Cultural fit thinking blocks diversity in two ways:

- Firstly, in recruitment and selection processes people who don't fit with the culture of the organisation are filtered out and never make it through the front door. For most organisations cultural fit is still the most important quality looked for at interview. This 'mini me' attitude blocks diversity and encourages similarity throughout the organisation.
- Secondly, employees cover, mask or downplay their individual differences to fit in and to avoid negative stereotyping, prejudice, harassment or discrimination. For the individual this means their behaviour does not fit their own values and this has a negative impact on their self-concept, self-worth and wellbeing. For the organisation, individuals made to act in a way that is against their own values are less engaged. They have lower levels of commitment and sense of belonging to the organisation and are more likely to consider leaving. When workers mask or cover their differences an organisation cannot make use of that difference and the ideas and new ways of doing things it can bring.



Encouraging inclusion

We recognise four main ways of encouraging inclusion and enabling people to bring their whole selves to work:

- **All workers feel respected.** Respect exists when workers feel that their uniqueness is valued and that they can bring their whole selves to work.
- **All workers experience a sense of belonging.** Belonging results when an individual's social and emotional needs for connection to others are met. You feel accepted by and connected to your workgroup and feel an essential part of that group.
- **All workers are empowered to contribute to work processes.** Empowerment means all workers can fully participate in the decision-making processes of the organisation and its operations. It means the different needs of diverse workers are recognised and that those differences are accommodated to ensure all workers can contribute fully to work practices.
- **All workers have a fair chance of progressing their careers.** Ultimately, the extent to which an organisation is inclusive is reflected in its development and promotion of diverse talent and the diversity of its leadership team. There must be fair and objective selection, appraisal and development to ensure that members of non-dominant cultural or social groups have an equal chance of progressing in the organisation.

As a platform co-operative and by using sociocratic decision-making methods, we will ensure that these four factors are present - **respect, belonging, empowerment and fair progression**. We want workers to be willing and able to share their diverse ideas, perspectives and experiences. We will support people to bring their whole self to work so that we can all benefit from their differences. This generally creates higher levels of wellbeing, engagement and efficiency.

Story: Willow was amazed to be offered the job. She'd only applied for this one because her best friend had encouraged her and she didn't want to let them down. She'd found applying for jobs before really difficult - people tended to concentrate on her appearance (she had colourful dreads and lots of piercings) more than her answers.

At the interview she found herself able to answer all the competence questions easily due to her growing up with a brother with special needs and caring for her grandparents. Willow realised that her complex and challenging family experiences were valued and she was **respected and recognised** for them.



Willow joined a Circle of care and support workers. She looked forward to their regular meetings where she could talk about her work and any issues she had, encourage others, plan schedules and cover absences. She felt that she was an essential part of the group and that she **belonged**.

Because Willow's Circle used sociocracy for decision making she had to always speak at meetings. She found this hard at first because although she liked chatting, she found it difficult to be assertive and to share her opinions. But with practice she found that the Circle was a safe place to talk and she was listened to. She found this very **empowering**.

Due to retirement, Willow's Circle needed a new Secretary. Through rounds of nominations with people explaining why they thought she had the skills for the role, Willow became the new Secretary. Though daunted by the new responsibility, and surprised by her colleagues' faith in her, she appreciated being given the role and felt that it had been a **fair progression** for her.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training

We will provide training for all workers in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and make sure the training is kept up to date. The Purpose Circle and the People Circle will be leading on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, but every Circle will make sure that it's work is underpinned by these principles.

Recruitment, selection and welcome

All selection exercises, especially recruitment and selection, will be carried out avoiding any prejudicial discrimination, and always by more than one person.

Any advertisements for working with the Co-op will be aimed to attract as diverse a group of applicants as possible and will not discourage any individual or group from applying.

Applicants will not be asked questions that could discriminate against them in any way, especially on grounds of a Protected Characteristic.

Applicants will not be asked about their health or disabilities before an offer of engagement is made, except where allowed by law: for example to check that the applicant can carry out an essential part of the role (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview.

Health or disability questions may be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, but these are anonymous and not used for selection or making decisions.



- The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against, or treat unfairly in any way, job applicants and existing workers because of a protected characteristic.
- In making the final selection for engagement the interview panel must make sure that it focuses on making objective, unbiased decisions. Personal opinions, attitudes and prejudices must not be allowed to influence the choice.
- The interview panel should not see sensitive equal opportunities monitoring data which may prejudice or influence a decision making process.
- In order to fulfil our commitment to employing disabled applicants recruitment panels must ensure that candidates who have declared a disability on their application are shortlisted and interviewed where they meet the minimum essential criteria.
- We encourage disabled candidates to apply and support them as far as possible all through the recruitment process. We will make all reasonable adjustments needed and seek advice from the person and from other relevant specialists to ensure we have identified all the adjustments that we could make to support the candidate.
- When we think that a post must be filled by a male, female or someone from a particular ethnic group for reasons of privacy and/or decency a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR) may apply. This will be discussed with the People Circle to ensure the requirements meet the legal definition of a GOR.

Story: Amir, Bert and Carla are the interview panel. They have finished all the interviews and have scored all the candidates. When they discuss their results Amir surprises Bert and Carla by giving Zahra such a low mark. Amir said that everybody knows that where Zahra lives means that she will have trouble getting to work in the winter and she'll often be late for work. Carla explained that where a candidate lived was of no consequence to their suitability for the role. If Zahra was regularly late for work they would deal with that when it happened. Amir had to be objective and rescore Zahra's interview.

Training Opportunities

All training opportunities will be published widely to all appropriate employees and volunteers and will not in any way exclude particular groups.

Disciplinary and grievance procedures

Any worker with Equal Care who acts against the letter or the spirit of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. We regard discrimination, abuse, harassment, victimisation or bullying of staff, volunteers, clients or others in the course of work as disciplinary offences that are likely to be regarded as gross misconduct.



We will treat seriously any complaints of unlawful discrimination on any of the stated grounds. Any workers with Equal Care, employees, volunteers, people getting support, their families or other stakeholders who believe that they have been discriminated against by workers (including volunteers) should raise the issue through the grievance policy.