

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION Policy 2022-23



Mission/Vision: The National Piping Centre (TNPC) exists to promote the study of the music and history of the Highland Bagpipe.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion policy

The National Piping Centre is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, stakeholders, clients and third parties with whom we work, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

Our policy's purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time, or full-time, and towards suppliers and contractors, as well as clients and other stakeholders.
2. Embed our commitment against unlawful discrimination on the grounds of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage or civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation.
3. Embed our commitment against unfair discrimination on the basis of socio-economic deprivation.
4. Oppose and avoid all forms of unfair discrimination. This includes in:
 - pay and benefits
 - terms and conditions of employment
 - dealing with grievances and discipline
 - dismissal

- redundancy
- leave for parents
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities
- access to tuition
- access to our public spaces and events.

Introduction / Narrative

The National Piping Centre (TNPC) is a multifaceted organisation and whilst many of our clients engage with us across our services, there are some who will typically engage with only one. At the same time, whilst there is a synergy between each facet of the organisation, the context of each is sufficiently diverse that it can sometimes be helpful not to view it as a single entity. Consequently, it is our view that TNPC can most effectively meet its obligations in the Act with each area of the business, led by its manager, focusing on what measures and mitigations are most appropriate for its context.

Therefore, the distinct areas are:

- The Piping School - teaching and assessing or examining in the playing of bagpipes through a range of opportunities, some formal, some informal,
- The Bagpipe Shop – sales of bagpipes and associated supplies and accessories
- The Tryst/Hospitality – the bistro and boutique 8-bedroom hotel
- The National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland
- Music Events

Each of these considers and contributes unique action points which informs the overarching TNPC EDI plan.

Through the development of this policy and associated action plan, it is recognised that this is the next stage in an evolutionary process for TNPC. In acknowledging the ten protected characteristics (including socio-economic deprivation), it is not viable to attempt to address all of these in this action plan. Rather, it is intended that these will be introduced once these actions become embedded.

As we continue to develop our policies and procedures, as they are implemented, and become embedded in our daily routines. TNPC is committed to:

- Advancing equality of opportunity for everyone we engage with including those who share a protected characteristic, or are included in Creative Scotland's priority groups,
- Fostering good relations for all who engage with us, particularly with those from priority groups or who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
- Seeking to remove all barriers with those who engage with us, especially those from a priority group or having a protected characteristic
- meet the needs of those from priority groups or with protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of others,
- Encouraging those from priority groups or with protected characteristics to engage with or participate in our activities and events increasingly, we hope, where their participation is disproportionately low.

Methodology

Our approach to creating this policy and action plan has been to work in our specialist teams as described above, as well as seeking some guidance from specialist external organisations, such as The Bit Collective, SWIM and others. It was felt that this would be more beneficial in two ways:

1. Each team would consist of a smaller number of personnel and so allow for greater engagement at all levels in the hierarchy, and
2. Allow each team to determine what their priorities are, specific to their operational context, but also considering potential synergies with other areas of the business.

To that end, each team was invited to work through the following prompts:

- Who would this work be targeting? e.g., a specific protected characteristic.
- What is the purpose of the proposed work? e.g., what is it that is intended to change?
- Who would benefit from that work and in what way?
- What evidence do we have to support this proposal? e.g., client feedback, observational data.
- What might be the positive impact of doing this work? e.g., it will increase engagement with the arts and an arts organisation for those who may not enjoy the opportunities to do so.
- What might be the negative impact of the proposed work? e.g., might supporting one group disadvantage another group?

A record of discussion and conclusions from each team has been created in response to the following prompts:

‘What do we know about...’

- ourselves? our customers/audiences?
- our community of interest?
- our local authority and postcode neighbours?
- relevant charities e.g., Age Scotland, disability-focused groups?
- Creative Scotland’s priorities in its 10-year plan and EDI priorities?
- best practice in our sector?

These conversations have led to an acknowledgement that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of hitherto unrecognised or inconspicuous barriers and a realisation that our compliance with our duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others. However, it is an exciting prospect for the Centre that we now are considering audiences that we haven’t so far, and that they will enhance the dynamic and diversity of our organisation, our building and our activities.

Our commitments

The National Piping Centre commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff, stakeholders, clients, and suppliers are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity, and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination across all aspects of TNPC's business areas.

All staff should understand they, as well as TNPC, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers, and the public

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others during TNPC's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under TNPC's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Make opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act 2010).
6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

7. Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Agreement to follow this policy

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by senior management and has been shared with employee representatives.

Our disciplinary and grievance procedures

Details of TNPC's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Policy devised by	Policy endorsed by	Date	Date for next review
EDI Steering Group (S Blake, D Doyle, F MacDonald)	Board of Trustees	October 2022	September 2023