

**Cymdeithas Grefyddol
y Cyfeillion (Crynwyr)
yng Nghymru a'r
Gororau**

Cymar

**The Religious Society
of Friends (Quakers) in
Wales and the Marches**

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**Charitable Incorporated
Organisation**

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**Registered charity number:
1207878**

**Putting our Testimony to Equality and Inclusion
Into Practice**

Date approved by Trustees: 2024.10.10

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Cymar Putting our Testimony to Equality and Inclusion into Practice

These procedures should be read in parallel with:

The Cymar Equality and Inclusion Policy

[er-quaker-employers-resource-2018](#)

[With a tender hand | Quakers in Britain](#)

[Quaker faith & practice | 5th Edition](#) (Chapters 23 and 27)

“How can we make the meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured, and strangers are welcome?”

Advices and Queries 18.

1. How we carry out our responsibilities and duties:

1.1: Putting our values into practice for everyone

This document is not a substitute for Equality law, but puts it in the context of Quaker principles, so that it reflects Quaker values as explained in Quaker Faith and Practice. The following examples of our values and practices are illustrated by extracts from Advices and Queries:

- **Acknowledging, respecting and celebrating individuality and difference:**

A&Q 16: Do you welcome the diversity of culture, language and expressions of faith in our Yearly Meeting...?

- **Listening to the views of others:**

A&Q 17: Do you respect that of God in everyone though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or be difficult to discern? Each of us has a particular experience of God and each must find the way to be true to it.

A&Q 17: When words are strange or disturbing try to sense where they come from and what has nourished the lives of others. Listen patiently and seek the truth which other people's opinions may contain for you.

- **Showing sensitivity and respect for others' feelings and cultures:**

A&Q 17: Avoid hurtful criticisms and provocative language.

A&Q 18: Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal, bear the burden of each other's failings and pray for one another.

- **Considering issues from a range of perspectives:**

A&Q 5: Take time to learn about other people's experience of the Light.

A&Q 7: Are you open to new light, from whatever source it may come? Do you approach new ideas with discernment?

- **Having equal respect for all:**

A&Q 11: Be honest with yourself. What unpalatable truths might you be evading?

A&Q 22: Respect the wide diversity among us in our lives and relationships. Refrain from making prejudiced judgements about the life journeys of others.... Remember that each one of us is unique, precious, a child of God.

- **Facing with courage negativity, whether within yourself or around you in the world:**

A&Q 11: Be honest with yourself. What unpalatable truths might you be evading?

A&Q 33: Are you alert to practices here and throughout the world which discriminate against people on the basis of who or what they are or because of their beliefs?

A&Q 37: If pressure is brought on you to lower your standard of integrity, are you prepared to resist it?

1.2 Practical steps we will take:

- Ask who is excluded by our current practices
- Undertake surveys and audits to assess our inclusivity if deemed necessary
- Actively and consciously encourage Friends to speak up if they feel in any way excluded
- Be mindful and find out about best inclusive practices
- Develop a library of further resources and information sources and develop a network of people with relevant knowledge and experience that we can call on when needs arise.

2.0 Understanding the Equality Law 2010 and Protected Characteristics

2.1 Protected characteristics

There are a number of 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010. We will not discriminate against others on the grounds of their protected characteristics. ([15.05 | Quaker faith & practice](#) [b]). The protected characteristics are:

- Age ([10.15 | Quaker faith & practice](#))
- Race (which includes colour and ethnic/ national origin) ([29.15 | Quaker faith & practice](#), Epistle of Britain Yearly Meeting Gathering 2021 "As a Yearly

Meeting in session we have declared our commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist faith community.”)

- Disability (which includes physical and sensory impairments, learning difficulties and disabilities, mental health issues, cognitive impairments and neurodivergency)
- Religion or belief ([Unity and diversity | Quaker faith & practice](#))
- Sex ([23.42 | Quaker faith & practice](#), [23.43 | Quaker faith & practice](#), [23.44 | Quaker faith & practice](#))
- Gender reassignment (Epistle of Britain Yearly Meeting Gathering 2021 “As a Yearly Meeting in session we lovingly acknowledged and affirmed the trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming Friends in our communities” and “We seek to provide places of worship and community that are welcoming and supportive to trans and non-binary people who want to be among us. *Belonging is more than fitting in*”. Minute 31)
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Sexual orientation ([23.45 | Quaker faith & practice](#))
- Marital or civil partner status.
- Although not covered by the law, we will also not discriminate unfairly in respect of other characteristics such as wealth, status or power ([23.46 | Quaker faith & practice](#)).

2.2 How we define discrimination

The following list is a general description of the types of acts that may both breach the Cymar Equality and Inclusion policy and may also be unlawful. Sometimes actions can be intentional, and sometimes unintentional and we include examples of both types in this list:

- When somebody is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic than somebody else has been — or would have been — in identical circumstances, then this is direct discrimination. Rejecting a job applicant because of their race or gender would, for example, amount to direct discrimination.
- When a group of people with one or more of the protected characteristics is put at a disadvantage by provisions, practices or criteria applied to all, this is indirect discrimination (unless it is objectively justified in the circumstances).
- When a hostile, humiliating, degrading or similarly offensive environment is created in relation to a protected characteristic, this is harassment. We deal in detail with harassment under our separate policy and procedures on harassment and bullying.
- When someone has complained about harassment or discrimination, or

supported another Friend or colleague in their complaint, it is victimisation if they are then treated less favourably.

- When Friends are excluded from worship or service by practices that act as barriers to their participation
- When physical barriers prevent people from accessing our Quaker activities •
When barriers to information prevent access to our Quaker activities
- When we fail to make adjustments to allow for accessible communication (e.g. hearing loops, captions or alternative text for photographs, translation of documents into Welsh/English or other languages if appropriate) (QF&P 10.14)
 - When Friends neglect to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people, in anticipation of their being needed, such as setting up and switching on a hearing loop in Meeting for Worship as a matter of course
 - When we fail to make adjustments for pregnant and nursing women

2.3 Other aspects of equality legislation

There are other actions which are illegal under the Equality Act 2010 and these are collectively labelled other acts. Examples include:

- instructing another person — or applying pressure on them — to discriminate
- knowingly assisting somebody else when they carry out a discriminatory act
- discriminating against somebody believed to have a protected characteristic, whether or not they actually do, or because they associate with a third party who does.

2.4 There are some practices which, although they may appear to breach the aims of the Cymar Equality and Inclusion policy, are in fact justifiable on objective and operational grounds. These are called lawful practices. If you are not sure whether some aspect of behaviour you have experienced or witnessed is discriminatory or a lawful practice, please ask for clarification from your Manager, Trustees or an Elder as appropriate.

3. Whose duty/role is it?

3.1 All those managing/supervising employees, volunteers and other workers, and these workers themselves, are essential for ensuring the success of the Equality and Inclusion policy and each has their own duties and responsibilities. We all have a legal responsibility to comply, and any of us may be found personally liable

for unlawful discrimination if we breach the terms of the policy.

3.2 Similarly, Premises Committees, Nominations Committees and others arranging our Quaker Meetings for Worship or other activities have a responsibility to comply with the Equality and Inclusion Policy.

3.3 Overall responsibility for the effective implementation and operation of the policy lies with Cymar's Trustees, along with Elders and Friends responsible for Pastoral Care in our constituent bodies.

3.4 The ethos and standards covered by the policy can only be achieved and maintained if all staff, volunteers, role holders and others cooperate fully, and understand their legal duty to comply. If you breach the policy, you may also make the Cymar liable for your actions. We therefore expect everyone to take appropriate personal responsibility for adhering to the policy's aims and commitments and for drawing any breaches to the attention of line managers, Elders or Trustees as appropriate.

4. How we recruit and make other selections:

4.1 We will recruit and carry out other types of selection procedures, e.g., redundancy, on the basis of merit using non-discriminatory and, as far as is possible, objective criteria.

4.2 Advertisements for vacancies will not include wording that may unfairly discourage some groups of people from applying, or stereotype in any way.

4.3 Nobody applying for employment with Cymar, or its constituent bodies, may be asked about their health or whether they have an impairment or chronic long-term illness before a job offer is made, except in very limited situations. It may, for example, be justifiable to ask whether the applicant needs any reasonable adjustments put in place for the interview, or to check that they are capable of carrying out a key part of the job. It is acceptable to make job offers dependent on a health declaration – such a declaration also enables us to make any reasonable adjustments needed by a worker.

4.4 It is unlawful to ask job applicants anything that might suggest intent to discriminate on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Asking an applicant about their religion for a job entailing weekend working would not, for example, be permissible.

4.5 Including health or disability questions in equal opportunities exercises is acceptable, but the data gathered must not be used for selecting or other employment related decisions.

5. How we will enforce the Equality and Inclusion policy and handle breaches:

5.1 We will investigate any complaint or allegation raised by Friends regarding a potential breach of the Equality and Inclusion policy, whether it relates to matters to

do with exclusion from Meeting for Worship, Quaker service or other Quaker activities. We will seek solutions, in consultation with appropriate others, which remove barriers to participation in our Quaker activities. We recognise our obligation to do this as a “Service Provider” under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. Complaints about access to Quaker activities should be addressed to the Local Meeting Eldership and Pastoral Care group in the first instance, who should also include the Cymar Trustee(s) from their Area Meeting in any investigation.

5.2 We will investigate any complaint or allegation raised by employees, volunteers and contractors, regarding a potential breach of this policy, and if you believe you have been harassed or discriminated against you should contact your manager as soon as possible if a worker or volunteer. If you are an employee and want to take formal action, you will need to follow our grievance procedure and read our policy on harassment and bullying. If you are not an employee, we will still take your complaint seriously and investigate it. Complaints should be directed to The Cymars Trustees who will investigate.

5.3 You will face disciplinary action (if you are an employee) if we find you have harassed or discriminated against anyone else in breach of this policy. Sometimes this type of behaviour may amount to gross misconduct, in which case you will be dismissed without notice and with no payment in lieu of notice.

5.4 If you are not an employee, but are a volunteer, contractor, or worker, your services may be terminated.

5.5 Occasionally people make complaints knowing them not to be true. They might do this to avoid or deflect disciplinary action for example. We view any complaint made in bad faith as an act of misconduct and this will normally lead to disciplinary action for employees. Bad faith complaints may lead to summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

5.6 We expect Property committees to regularly review their properties to consider if they are fit for purpose and to make sure that they do not cause discriminatory barriers for those wishing to attend Meeting for Worship or participate in other Quaker activities. Similarly, those arranging external activities are expected to take into consideration the needs of all participants and to anticipate any adjustments that may need to be made to enable all to participate fully.

5.7 We will seek to minimise digital exclusion by providing such support as is needed, whether training or financial support, when necessary, to enable role holders, staff and volunteers to carry out their roles.

5.8 We recognise that any disclosures about protected characteristics by those connected to us through worship, voluntary activity or paid work on our behalf should be treated confidentially by as few Friends as possible, on a “need-to know” basis, and relevant records must be held safely and securely.

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Related Policies and Procedures:

- Cymar Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Cymar Employment Policy

- Cymar Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Cymar Grievance Procedure
- Cymar Disciplinary Procedure
- Cymar Workforce Privacy Notice

Other Organisations which can provide information and support:

[Advice and guidance | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/)

[Acas | Making working life better for everyone in Britain](https://www.acas.org.uk/)

[Centre for Accessible Environments](https://www.cae.gov.uk/)

[Disability Wales](https://www.disabilitywales.org/)

[Disability Rights UK](https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/)

Useful link:

[Quaker Disability Equality Group Access Audit and Statement](#)