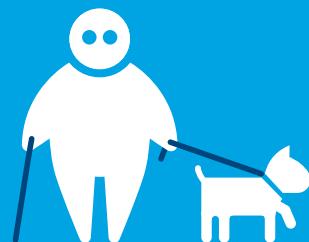


EQUALITY
DIVERSITY
INCLUSION



INTRODUCTION

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create international opportunities for the people in the UK and other countries and build trust between them worldwide.

The British Council is strongly committed to Equal Opportunity and Diversity policy, which is about treating people fairly and without bias and creating conditions in the workplace and wider society that encourage and value diversity and promote dignity.

People are different in many visible and non-visible ways. Understanding, valuing and effectively managing these differences can result in greater participation that can be leveraged for success at an individual, team, organisation and wider societal level.

Our Equal Opportunity Policy, which is linked to our values and our Diversity Strategy, supports us in this. Working effectively with diversity is an essential part of the British Council's work.

British Council rejects unjustified discrimination and is committed to ensuring policies, strategies and processes that promote equality of opportunity are in place. We strive to earn the respect and confidence of our clients, customers and suppliers and to maintain high standards for their benefit.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL IS COMMITTED TO

- Understanding, valuing and working with diversity to enable fair to full participation in our work;
- Ensuring that there is no unjustified discrimination in our recruitment, selection and other processes;
- Ensuring action that promotes equality of opportunity, including conducting equality screening and impact assessments of policies and functions and progressing diversity action plans;
- Treating individuals with whom we work fairly and with dignity and respect;
- Playing our part in removing barriers and redressing imbalances caused by inequality and discrimination.

DISCRIMINATION

Unjustified discrimination is a barrier to equality of opportunity, inclusion and human right and is unacceptable in the British Council.

When talking about Equal Opportunity and Diversity, the British Council is focusing on 7 main areas:

- **Gender;**
- **Age;**
- **Disability;**
- **Sexual orientation;**
- **Work-life balance;**
- **Race and ethnicity;**
- **Religion and beliefs.**

GENDER

The achievement of equality between men and women is a prerequisite for a democratic and sustainable development of Ukrainian society. Discrimination on the gender ground usually takes place on the labour market — hiring, discharging, and providing social safeguards, relations between employer and employees.

A World Bank study says that better access of women to education and vocational training leads to improvement on the labour market and increasing productivity growth in developing countries.

According to the Ministry of social policy 55% of unemployed are women. They chair only in 12% large and middle enterprises, only 13.5% of top-management are female.

BRITISH COUNCIL IS COMMITTED TO TACKLING GENDER DISCRIMINATION BY OFFERING:

- Equal opportunity for career growth;
- Professional development for both men and women;
- Opportunity to combine responsibilities at home and at work;
- Flexible work hours;
- Flexible working arrangements for women with family responsibilities.



AGE

Assumptions about people's ability and competence based on their age result in biased employment decisions — the most common form of age discrimination. One third of unemployed people in Ukraine are 45-59 years old. Young people with very little or no working experience also experience employment discrimination.

The British Council believes that while the old and the young have different perceptions and values, we are all members of the same society and have the right to be treated equally. We are convinced that different skills and experience help companies to achieve their aims.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL PROVIDES:

- Fair and transparent recruitment and selection process, based on openly advertised, clearly defined and consistently applied criteria;
- Opportunities for young and inexperienced professionals (Internship programme and consequently vacancies);
- Option for re-employment after the local statutory retirement age.



DISABILITY

British Council recognises that disabled people, including those with specific learning differences and mental health issues, are disabled not necessarily through their own impairments or relative ability, but through common social attitudes and physical and attitudinal barriers that result in marginalisation and lack of access to full human rights.

We are keen to use the social model of disability and do all we can to identify and dismantle the barriers facing disabled people who come into contact with us, whether as staff, partners or customers.

- We guarantee interviews to disabled applicants who fulfil the essential requirements for an advertised job;
- We make reasonable adjustments in the working place to accommodate needs of disabled employees;
- We ensure that our premises are fully accessible for people with disabilities;
- We aim to ensure that we accommodate any special needs and requirements that our visitors/ customers/ partners may have.



DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

General rules:

- Don't feel uncomfortable when you talk to people with disabilities;
- If you don't know how to interact with disabled persons – simply ask;
- Think before you speak;
- Do not make conclusions. Disabled people know best what they can and cannot do. Don't make decisions for them about their participation in any activity;
- Humans come first. Avoid expressions that turn adjectives into nouns e.g. “the disabled” which depersonalises them or which defines people in terms of their disability;
- Use the phrase “person in wheel chair”, not “disabled in a wheelchair”.
Wheelchair – is a means of transportation for individual mobility.
Say person with a disability instead of simply disabled;
- If you talk to a person with visual impairment you may use the expression It was nice seeing you and See you. They use them too.



MOBILITY IMPAIRMENT

- When talking to a wheelchair user, try to position yourself on eye level with him/her. If this is impossible — distance a little so the person can look you in the eyes without bending his/her neck;
- Never lean on or put anything on a person's wheelchair;
- Do not push or touch a person's wheelchair — it's a part of their personal space. If you help somebody to access a ramp without being told to do so, it may cause wheelchair damage. You may separate parts of the wheelchair if you grab the handles or footrests;
- People who use canes or crutches need their arms for balance, so never grab them;
- People with mobility impairment may lean on doors when they are opening them. If you open the door from the other side, or suddenly try to help them from their side, it may cause them to fall.



VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

- When you meet a blind person, you should necessarily name yourself and if needed your job position;
- Persons with visual impairment use hands to balance. If you want to guide, offer your hand to hold, but do not grab the person's hand first;
- If you have to leave a person firstly inform him/her about the exit location and leave her next to a table, chair or anything else. Centre of the room doesn't mean anything to a person with visual impairment;
- Do not give attention to, touch or feed guide dogs or the white cane. The guide dog works and has to be focused. The white cane is part of the personal space. If a person tilts the cane, don't change its position;
- A person with visual impairment may need material in written form with big fonts. Clarity and size of the font is as important as spaces between words.



HEARING IMPAIRMENT

- Speak to the deaf person and not to their sign language interpreter;
- Rephrase sentences, if a person doesn't understand. Do not repeat them;
- Speak clearly. Remember most people with hearing impairment lip-read;
- There is no sense in raising your voice with a deaf person. If the person uses hearing aids — they are adjusted to a normal level of voice;
- Ask the person you are talking to about how she would like to communicate: sign language or in writing. If you fail to understand a person with hearing impairment, just tell him/her.



SEXUAL ORIENTATION

We are committed to tackling discrimination and harassment against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people (LGBT) and respect the right of individuals to be open or otherwise about their sexual orientation. All colleagues can expect that their private life will be respected and that negative messages or stereotypes, on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation, will not be reinforced at work.

According to a national wide online survey more than 1 million people in Ukraine stated that they are part of the LGBT community, and 79% of them faced discrimination.

TIP:

Check if your company has a policy on non-discrimination and equal opportunities. Introduce this idea to HR or legal department and help your employer create a more effective and impartial business.



WORK-LIFE BALANCE

British Council understands the benefits of helping employees to balance their work and personal commitments and is committed to supporting staff to work flexibly wherever this is operationally possible. In order to achieve this, we have policies related to a range of flexible working arrangements and ones related to adoptive, maternity and paternity leave, career breaks, special leave, carer leave, assistance with childcare and parental leave.

- A work-life balance policy is an integral part of a successful business;
- British Council seeks to reconcile work and home responsibilities;
- Consideration can be given to staff with specific cultural/religious needs
- There are options of flexible hours, working from home, part-time employment, career break.



WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Useful tips:

- **Your health should always be your number one priority**

Stress is one of the biggest causes of poor health. To combat it: get enough sleep, eat regularly, take time out for relaxation, exercise at least three times a week;

- **Take time out for yourself**

Taking just one hour, once a week to do something for yourself can do wonders for your wellbeing — and your relationships and career will benefit too;

- **Manage your time more effectively**

Both at work and home. Implement some simple time management techniques: create to-do lists and prioritise tasks, avoid time wasters like surfing the Web and e-mail, share the load (both at work and home wherever you can), set yourself time limits and boundaries;

- **Learn to say ‘no’**

Taking on too many tasks can be to your detriment. Learn to say no to things when there’s too much on your plate. Rather than feeling guilty, you’ll learn that saying ‘no’ can be really empowering;

- **Separate work and family life**

Learn to turn off the laptop after hours and resist checking your e-mails at all hours of the day and night. Ideally the minute you leave the office, you should leave your working life behind.



RACE AND ETHNICITY

Racial discrimination is prejudicial treatment of people on the grounds of ethnic or national origin. British Council's work is enriched by the different ethnic/racial, cultural groups and travelling communities we engage with.

In the British Council over 60% are Ukrainian, around 18% are Russian, and there are small numbers of Bulgarian, Eastern European, Northern European, Sudanese, Swedish, Tatar and employees of Ukrainian-Russian origin. We encourage diversity in our workforce and do not discriminate by any means against any racial or ethnical groups during recruitment and selection process.

Avoid making assumptions or stereotyping from people's ethnic origin, religious or linguistic background.



RELIGION AND BELIEFS

We value and respect the religion and belief and cultural diversity of staff working in British Council and communities in which we operate, and make every endeavour to ensure that needs and preferences are met.

People are free to follow their cultural/ religious beliefs, without fear of discrimination. You should be respectful of people's religion and be aware that some terminology may offend some people.

Different religious groups are represented in Ukraine: 68% of Ukrainians are Orthodox Christians, 7.6% — Greek Catholic, 1.9% — Protestants, 0.9% — Muslims, 0.4% — Roman Catholic, another 7.2% consider themselves simply Christians, and 13.2% are not adherents of any religious community. Recognising these differences and making practical arrangements for special religious needs (e.g. pray room, flexible holiday schedule) leads to a more inclusive and productive working environment.



RELIGION

Useful tips:

- Educate yourself. Learn about the major world religions, their belief systems and values, and also learn about lesser known religions. Notice the differences, but pay closer attention to the similarities, most religions will have similar common themes;
- Explore other religions. Ask your friends of other faiths if you can attend a worship service with them, or go to a different church, mosque, or synagogue;
- Maintain an attitude of respect. Look for similarities not differences. Set aside the notion that your religion is “right” and other religions are automatically “wrong” even if it is a tenement of your faith;
- Ask questions in a respectful and polite manner to members of other religions. You will find more common ground than you might expect.



